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Number 59

May 1989

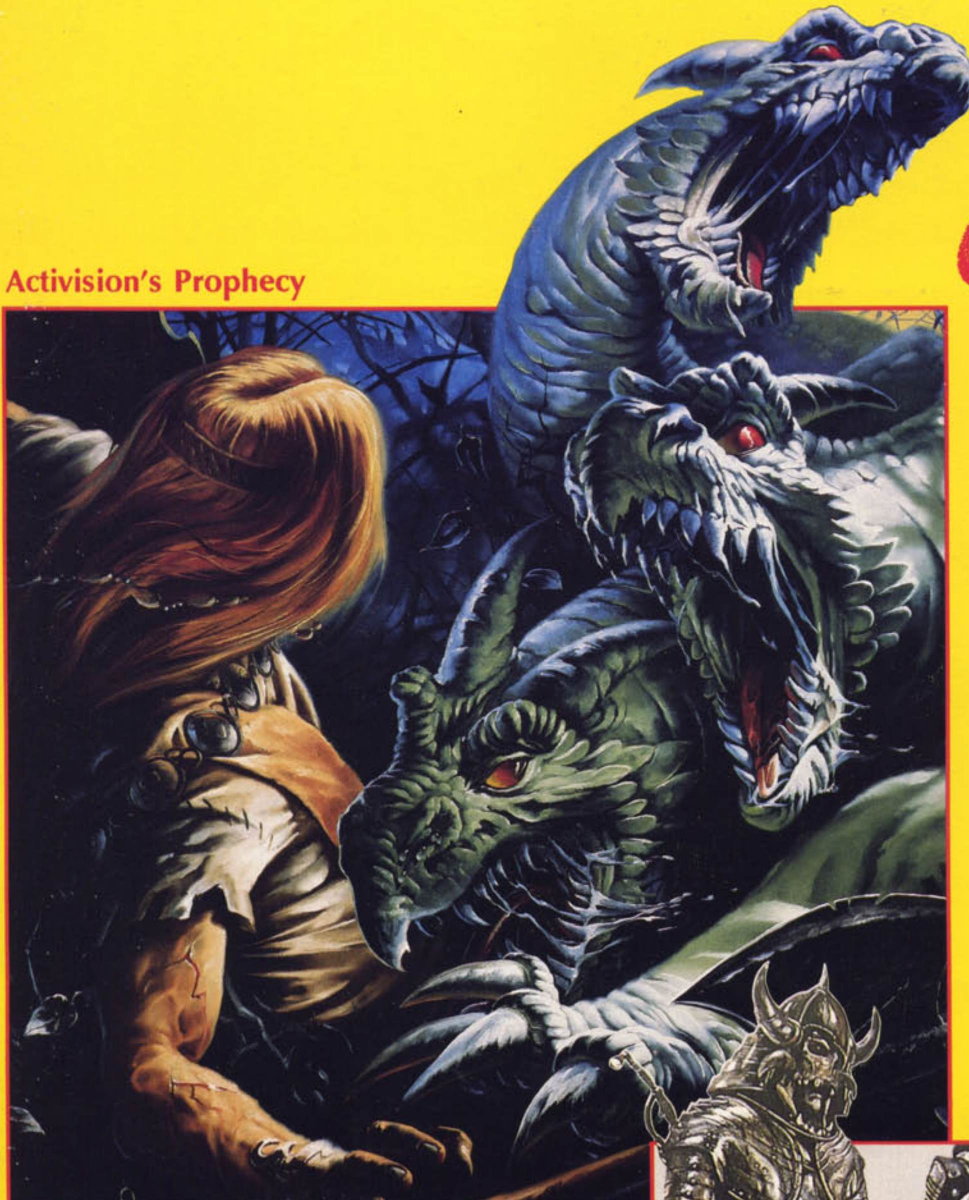
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COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

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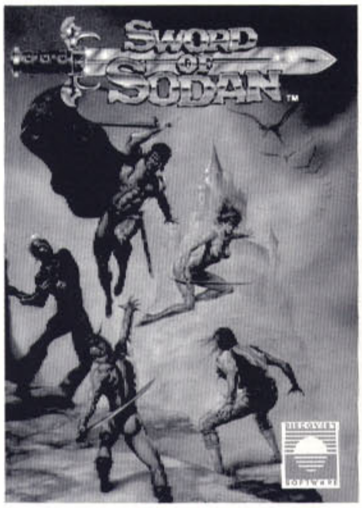
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Covering the World of Computer Games For Eight Years

May 1989 **Number 59**



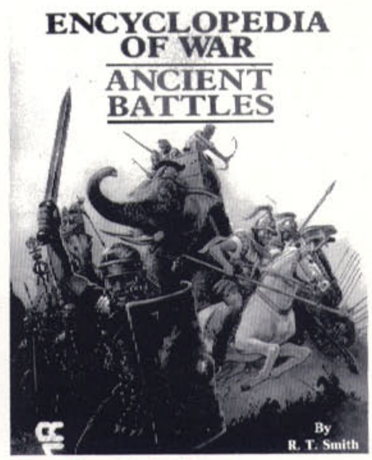
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Zoned for Development

We'd like to add two bits of information to Scorpia's excellent review of adventure game development systems ("Build Your Own Adventure Game," CGW, Feb. 1989).

As noted, the *Adventure Game Toolkit* lacks an integrated editor or debugger. However, AGT now includes a AGTMACRO, a memory-resident program that automatically generates templates for nouns, rooms, and creatures with a single keystroke, from within your word processor. Also recently added is AGTNUM, a numeric pre-processor written by William Martinson so that game authors can include text references rather than numbers, in their game definitions.

Second, as Scorpia states, AGT and other adventure-writing programs are copyrighted and resulting games may not be sold without permission. However, to encourage development and sale of AGT games, **Softworks** sells an unlimited run-time license for a one-time flat fee of $10. Thereafter, the game-writer can sell his or her game together with the AGT run-time code, without any royalties—even if the game sells more copies than *Zork*.

David R. Malmberg
Softworks
San Jose, CA

Scorpion Assailed

I am writing in response to Scorpia's March review of *Might and Magic II*. As author of the game, I feel I am obligated to respond to the rather inadequate review.

Might and Magic II: Gates to Another World is a three-dimensional fantasy role-playing adventure game. Combat is an important part of the game, but it is not the only part of the game. *Might and Magic II* is not a text adventure, nor is it a graphically enhanced parser-style interactive adventure. The game incorporates many new and innovative features in unique ways to enhance playability and speed up game play. Many of these aspects were misinterpreted or ignored by the reviewer.

For instance, the review stated that, "Character classes are the same as before." This infuriated me. Character classes were unquestionably altered. Starting from the ground up, all character classes were modified and improved from M & M I to II. I even added two new character classes to heighten playability.

Other statements similarly roused my ire. For example, the reviewer stated that, "General exploration is not worthwhile." A party will never be able to find even the most rudimentary of clues, information, or events without general exploration. She also claimed that hirelings, "Have no personalities of their own (their names aren't even imaginative)." As to their personalities, the game player helps create them as they adventure onward, as much as they add flavor to their own, personally created characters. If, by personality, she means that the hirelings do not talk to you, I must clarify that M & M II is not a text adventure. As to their names, I found the names to be quite humorous, as have most who have commented on them.

I was highly disappointed when Scorpia contended that "Combat has not changed at all." As she reviewed M & M I, as well as M & M II, I had hoped that she would easily recognize the many changes. Alas, my hopes were all too easily dashed. Perhaps, the only thing *not* changed in combat were the command keys in the actual combat menu. A major complaint about the old combat system was that after the initial, old combat menu (Attack, Run, Bribe, Surrender), the monster picture disappeared. So, I added a completely animated window of the pictured monster. In addition, the entire combat screen, including the picture, is now a double hi-res graphic screen. Many other changes were made, including the addition of the Hide option and alteration of the Run command.

Perhaps the most innovative feature in the entire game was not even mentioned in the article. This truly shocked me as I know of no other game with a similar feature. By going to the control panel, the game player may adjust the disposition of his/her party of adventurers at absolutely any time. The disposition of the party directly influences the level of difficulty of the game. The party of adventurers may play at one of four levels; Inconspicuous, Average, Aggressive, or Thrill-seeker. The level helps to determine the frequency of encounters, the number of monsters contained in an encounter, and the strength of an encounter. Basically, the player adjusts the difficulty of the game at a whim and it goes into effect instantaneously. When you desire more experience or feel that you are not being challenged sufficiently, make the disposition more aggressive. I strongly believe that use of this option opens up new horizons of game play and eases overall playability tremendously.

Perhaps, the most dreadful blow the reviewer struck was her assertion that, "the endgame is remarkable for its pointlessness." Rather than fall into the routine find-and-kill the evil wizard scenario, I opted for something different, a puzzle. While difficult, trying to solve a real-time cryptogram to save Cron from imminent destruction presents an intellectual challenge to the game player, instead of a test of whether or not combat was mastered after countless hours of playtime. To end the game after a successful battle seems incredibly anticlimactic. The ending of a game should be a true test of a player's resources, not a holocaust-sized battle. Thus, the cryptogram.

The main reason I gave a final reward of 50 million experience points after the successful completion of M & M II is because so many people continued to play *M & M I* after winning it to hunt, search, and conquer areas which had given them previous trouble. I figured that if such a large number of people enjoyed doing this, I might as well make it easy for them to do it in the sequel.

As to the reviewer's obvious distaste of combat and her claims that it is disappointingly excessive," and an, "exercise in butchery," I must say that approximately half of all time spent in any current fantasy role-playing game is combat time. And for those areas the reviewer complained of when she was high level and had to battle 200 plus monsters, there are spells created for high level characters in just those situations. If actually cast and used properly, the monsters would quickly evaporate and become no problem at all.

I do not think the reviewer was looking to play an FRP in *Might and Magic II*. Instead, she was looking for an adventure game. I do not enjoy playing a game where I have to type in thousands of words attempting to get the right ones. This is why I like fantasy role-playing games and why I created Might and Magic. To me, a game should consist of all single key commands or multiple choice menus. In the Might and Magic series, I believe that I have accomplished this to the finest degree possible.

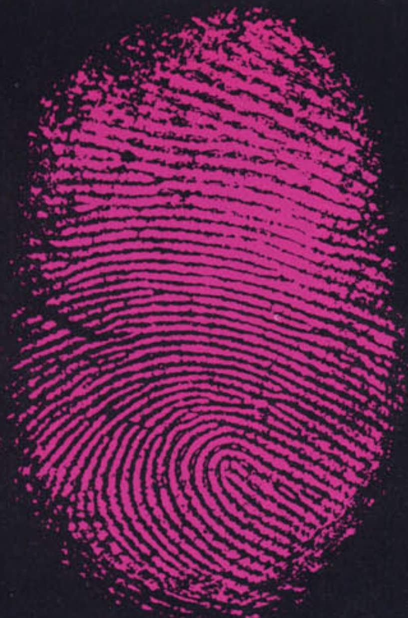
A final observation: maybe a different reviewer should oversee the CRPG genre. Of the reviews Scorpia has done of CRPGs, even those with a favorable end have been thrashed to within an inch of death before earning the "recommended" status. However, most were not even recommended outright. The majority of these have been sequels to classic games and have gone on to become classics themselves and favorites of game players everywhere, bereft of Scorpia's approval.

If you wish to play a CRPG which tests all of your abilities as a game player, I offer *Might and Magic II* for your pleasure. It is an adventure which spans across the globe of a large world. *Might and Magic II* is a modern streamlined version of classical FRPs. If you have any doubts on whether or not it is a game for you, go to your local software store and ask to see a demo. I know you will be impressed.

Jon Van Caneghem
New World Computing, Inc.
Van Nuys, CA

Ed.: Scorpia responds:

Each review I write is done with the goal of presenting a clear picture of the game under consideration. This includes the bad points as well as the good. People who are going to buy a game are entitled to know what they will get for their money. Whether or not someone agrees with my bottom-line assessment is not important. What is important is that enough information be presented in the article itself for the reader to make his or her own judgment to purchase the game. This is why my reviews are so detailed and don't gloss over the flaws. The game buyer needs to know what the weak spots are and what, if anything, can be done about them. In actual fact, very few of the games I reviewed came with a blunt "not recommended." The majority have been either "recommended" or "recommended with reservations.". Overall, it is my job to show a game as it is, including the "warts", and let the readers make the ultimate decision as to whether or not it is a game they want to play, irrespective of the bottom line.



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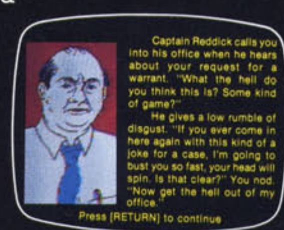
The Case of the Peculiar Corpse: The trouble begins when an unidentified body is found floating in the middle of Riverside Park Lake.

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POLICE BLOTTER: The player must solve seven criminal cases in this graphic text adventure for one to four players. From the creators of Murder by the Dozen, the player picks a location to visit and is directed to a paragraph in the "clue book" to read. This game is also similar to the boardgame "221 B Baker Street." Apple II ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #1

Capcom
1283-C Old Mountain View/ Alviso Road
Sunnyvale, CA 94089

GHOSTS 'N GOBLINS: Rescuing a beautiful princess is the task at hand for the knight in shining armor (player), in this action game for one to two players. Using javelins, torches, swords, axes and crosses, the knight must fight his way past six gates, guarded by the usual assortment of monsters. IBM (pictured) ($34.95) and C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #2.



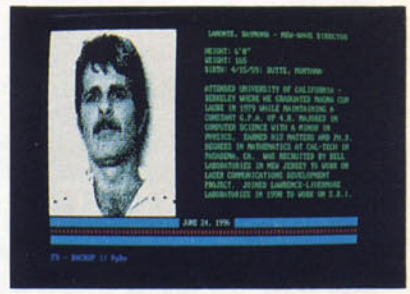
Police Blotter



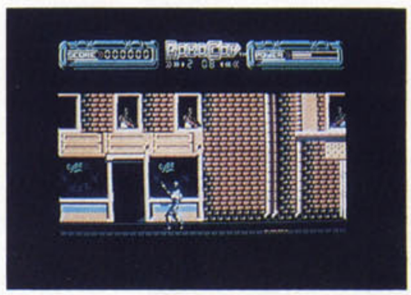
Ghosts 'N Goblins



Search For The Titanic



Presumed Guilty



Robocop



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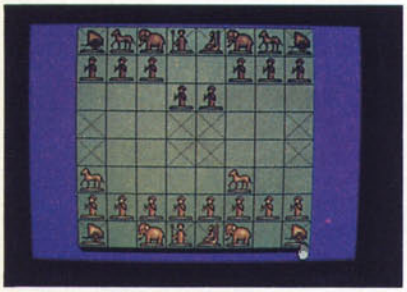
Capstone
14160 S.W. 139th Court
Miami, Florida 33186

SEARCH FOR THE TITANIC: Hunting down the famous shipwreck, and exploring it is the player's goal in this oceanographic, adventure simulation. Starting out as an inexperienced oceanographer, the player must build a reputation by finding and exploring other lost vessels, which will reward him with status and funding for more ambitious projects. Each expedition needs planning, funding, personnel, equipment, maps and finally, conquering the elements to locate, arrive at, and dive the wreck. Digitized photos of the actual wreck of the Titanic await the successful salvager. This game has tremendous depth. [Ed. Note: Groan!] IBM (pictured) ($39.95), Apple IIE/GS ($34.95) and C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #3.

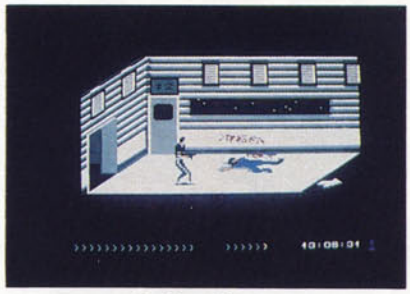
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Data East
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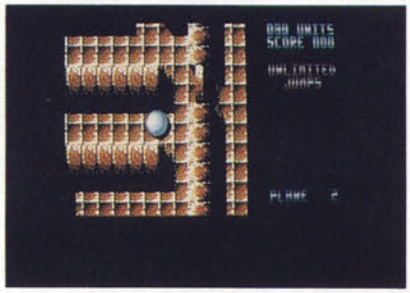
Distant Armies



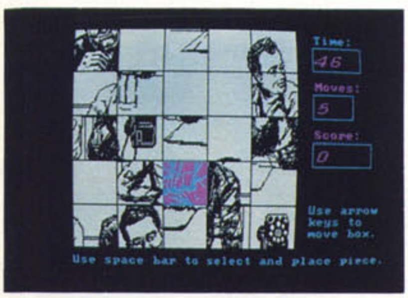
Project Firestart



Kings Of The Beach



Mind-Roll



The Honeymooners



Candy Land

ROBOCOP: The arcade game comes to the home computer in this action game based on the movie. Robocop, part man and part machine, must battle the street forces of evil, and ultimately clean up Old Detroit. Armed with a special issue Auto-9 as his main weapon, the player can also kick, punch and jab. Nine different missions provide the complexity in this joystick driven game. C-64 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #5.

SUPER HANG-ON: The hit, arcade game of motorcycle racing around the world comes to the Mac. The player can reach speeds of up to 160 mph on a variety of tracks, or he can use the course builder to custom design a track of his own. Game points are awarded for precision driving in distance, speed and course completion. Mac ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #6.

Eagle Tree Software
P.O. Box 164
Hopewell, VA 23860

DISTANT ARMIES: Players survey the evolution of chess over the last 1000 years with this fascinating series of strategy games. Rules, hints and tips for games from India, Burma, China, Europe and the Middle East are all provided in this package. Players can compete against each other, the computer, or watch computer vs. computer. Multiple difficulty levels, two and three dimensional views, and hint modes are all available. The game uses keyboard or mouse. A real gem! Amiga ($44.95). Circle Reader Service # 7.

Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Dr.
San Mateo, CA 94404

PROJECT FIRESTART: Shades of the movie "Alien," as the player must investigate a dead research ship, that has a genetic experiment loose and on the prowl. The player must find out what is happening to the silent ship, rescue any survivors, find the science log and, if necessary, blow up the ship to solve the game successfully. One player, one joystick (one inevitable confrontation). C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #8.

KINGS OF THE BEACH: Professional beach volleyball for those who are stuck inside on a rainy day. One or two players compete in a five beach tournament in Rio, Australia, Hawaii, Chicago, and San Diego. The computer opponents get progressively tougher as the tournament goes on. The practice mode allows you to practice bumps, sets and spikes before actually going on to the sand. IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #9.

Epyx
600 Galveston Dr.
P.O. Box 8020
Redwood City, CA 94063

MIND-ROLL: Players roll an orb through 10 planes of difficulty in this joystick driven, action game. Each plane has a variety of different puzzles and obstacles to overcome to allow progression to the next level. Similar to "Marble Madness", points are scored by rolling over certain tiles, beating the clock, and finishing the progressively tougher levels. C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #10.

First Row Software
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

THE HONEYMOONERS: Put on your "Raccoon" cap and grab your bowling balls, Ralph and Ed need your help in getting to the Raccoon Convention in Miami Beach. An assortment of four mini-games await one to four would be Honeymooners. Players help Norton fix leaks in the sewers, assist Alice and Trixie piecing together a jumbled picture puzzle, help Ralph drive a bus around New York City, and attempt to answer trivia questions in the "$99,000 Answer" TV show. IBM ($29.95) Circle Reader Service #11.

(Continued on page 49)



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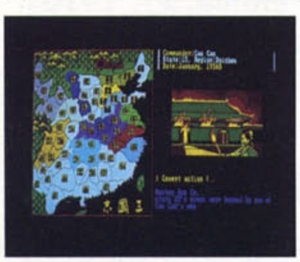
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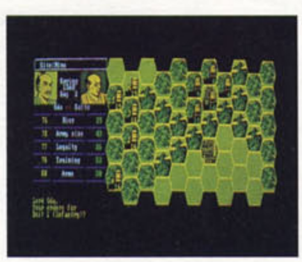
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• Mordor, They Rode!
• Dial "M" For Mordor
• From Mordor, With Love

(We couldn't decide on a title for this article, so please choose the one you like best and let us know on your RID card which one you picked.)

by Chris Lombardi



TITLE:	War In Middle Earth
SYSTEM:	Amiga, IIGS, IBM, ST
REVIEWED:	Amiga
PRICE:	$49.99
DESIGNERS:	Alan Clark & Robert Clardy
PUBLISHER:	Melbourne House 711 W. 17th St. Unit G9 Costa Mesa, CA

It was a year since Frodo last spoke to the great wizard Gandalf. It was during that visit to the shire that Gandalf had revealed to Frodo the nature and origin of his precious ring. Since that time, Frodo had noticed that things in Middle Earth were going amiss. Hobbit gossip was filled with rumors of strange travelers in Bree and murmurings about the movements of large armies of men. Fell beasts once again roamed the countryside in search of prey and the wise spoke of the return of the Shadow in the land of Mordor. Now, the hastily written letter from Gandalf instructing Frodo to leave for Rivendell at once, warning of evil riders in black. Accompanied by his dear friend Pippin and his faithful servant Sam, Frodo packed his provisions and closed the door of his comfortable hole behind him, beginning his fate-filled quest, and the War in Middle Earth.

J.R.R. Tolkien's epic trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*", has been brought previously to the computer in adventure games. Now, bMelbourne House has recreated the world of the Tolkien trilogy and put new spin on the story with their strategy/adventure game, *War in Middle Earth* (*WIM*). *WIM* offers you the chance to lead the Fellowship of the Ring and the good armies of Middle Earth in their quest to destroy the ring of Power and defend Middle Earth from the armies of the Dark Lord.

Unfinished Tale (Game Play)

Game play takes place on three levels providing three different degrees of detail. The full map level gives an overview of the whole of Middle Earth, displaying all forces as small colored dots. The campaign level, where orders are given and most of the game is played, gives a more detailed view of the terrain and forces. Finally, the animation level gives you a magnified view of a single location on the map. Characters are fully animated on this level and are set against beautiful background scenery. It is here that small battles and encounters with friendly characters take place.

The objectives of the game are very similar to those of the trilogy. The Ring of Power must be unmade in the fiery cracks of Mt. Doom and the armies of the three races (elves, men, and dwarves) must be mustered to defend their lands against both the traitor Saruman and the Dark Lord. Beforeyou *can* muster these forces, and thus, control their movements, you must present the leader of each people with a token to prove the "truth of your embassy." These artifacts are randomly scattered across the land and clues to their whereabouts can be obtained from various characters encountered during the game. Once these items are found and presented to the respective leaders, the forces of good can be mobilized to prepare a defense of Middle Earth. If the Ring should be captured and brought to Saruman or Sauron or three of five strongholds of good are overrun by the evil hordes, the game ends in defeat.

The game begins with Frodo and friends heading south out of Hobbiton. Not much can be done until the hobbits reach Rivendell, so this is usually the initial objective. This can be quite difficult at first, and may require a few tries. Following the story line in the books is usually the best bet here. Once in Rivendell the Fellowship of the Ring is formed and the quest really begins. At some point the 'tokens of truth' must be gathered, and the earlier in the game the better. This can be quite time consuming, so it may be wise to split up the Fellowship to speed things.

Once in command of the allied forces, the war begins in earnest. The first move is usually made by Saruman. His threat can be best handled by the horsemen of the Rohirrim. They are a strong force, comprising a large portion of your army, and can hold off Saruman for a long time.

The threat from Sauron is the most serious, and can be handled a number of ways. If all your forces can be gathered before Sauron launches his main attack, the ring may be muscled into Mordor using a football type maneuver (student body left?). A more defensive approach is also possible. Sauron's army is huge, but the walls of Minas Tirith are strong and can hold them back for some time. Following the story line by sneaking the ring into Mordor is also a possibility but is very risky. The gates of the land are well guarded and the Valley of the Shadow is crawling with orcs and other nasties.

The designers have taken very special care in creating a Middle Earth which very accurately reflects that of the trilogy. All major characters and places encountered in the books are here. In the course of your journeys you'll meet everyone from jolly old Tom Bombadil, and the beautiful elf queen, Galadriel, to Sauron's right-hand man, the Lord of the Nazgul. Even the numbers of the opposing forces conform to those in the books. Each location on the map is accompanied by a detailed, water-color style, background scene. From the campaign level, these places can be viewed at any time by clicking on the location with a magnifying glass icon. Some of these scenes are extremely well-rendered interpretations of the Tolkien text.

Wisdom From The Red Book Of March (Game Hints)

(WARNING: This section contains specific hints which some readers may wish to avoid.)

Getting the Hobbits to Rivendell can be difficult with the Nine Riders buzzing madly about the shire. Your best path is the one chosen by Frodo in the books. Move quickly down to Buckland to pick up Merry. Then, pay a visit to Tom Bombadil. If you wait long enough, the Riders will move their search down the road toward Rivendell and eventually all gather at the Fords of Bruinen. Once they are gone, you can go up to Bree where Aragorn can usually be found. When he joins the group, you can sit back and let him do the rest.

Though emphasized by the documentation as an integral part of your quest, the gathering of the tokens is not really necessary to win the game. If the Fellowship joins with either Eomer of the Rohirrim or Faramir of the men of Gondor, you will be able to control these forces. Furthermore, once the forces of Sauron are on the move, you will be able to command all other forces of good, anyway.

Your first objective should be to get rid of the threat posed by Saruman. This is quite easy using assistance from the Ents of Fangorn Forest. To acquire their help, simply pay them a visit at Derndingle. You won't be able to give them orders but they will immediately march down to Isengard and destroy Saruman's main forces. They are probably the single most effective fighting force available to you, and once they complete their mission at Isengard they will provide the valuable service of protecting your rear from assault for the rest of the game.

There are a number of ways you can get the ring into Mordor, but I've found the most effective is the plan suggested by Boromir in the story. Take the ring to Minas Tirith and gather the forces of Godow and Rohan behind its walls. You should be able to hold off Sauron's assault until the other forces arrive. Once you have taken care of the larger portion of Sauron's troops, you can then sneak the ring through a gap in the defense and destroy it in the Cracks of Doom.

If you're in need of additional forces, remember the oath breakers of Dunharrow. Their restless spirits will be more than happy to honor their oath and fight under the right leadership.

Return of Tolkien (Conclusions)

As an avid Tolkien fan, I found *War in Middle Earth* to be a delightful jaunt through the lore and legend that I enjoyed so much in the books. The exquisite detail and accuracy of the game make this the definitive Tolkien computer game. However, I found the strategic elements in the game to be somewhat under par. Though the documentation stresses that no two games are exactly alike, the basic objectives and basic strategies for success remain the same. Once a few elements of strategy are mastered, the game becomes quite easy to win. Though some may find it engaging to repeatedly play the game and try different approaches, this reviewer lost interest after only a few hours. The game's lack of replayability is the largest design flaw.



In summary, this is a detailed recreation of Tolkien's world, accompanied by some very nice graphics and sound. It would make an interesting showpiece to add to any Tolkien fan's software library. However, be warned that the strategy element is, at best, beginner level and replayability is questionable.

GRAND ALLIANCE



"Grand Alliance" is a fully computer moderated play-by-mail game which involves the battle of survival between human and alien races. Players represent either a member of the human race or of the alien race with the universe as a setting. The game is played on a map of three parallel levels where each level is composed of 240 planetary systems. Each player must solve military and political problems within own camp before war can be waged effectively against the opposing race. Each side is faced with the same situations and problems to overcome.

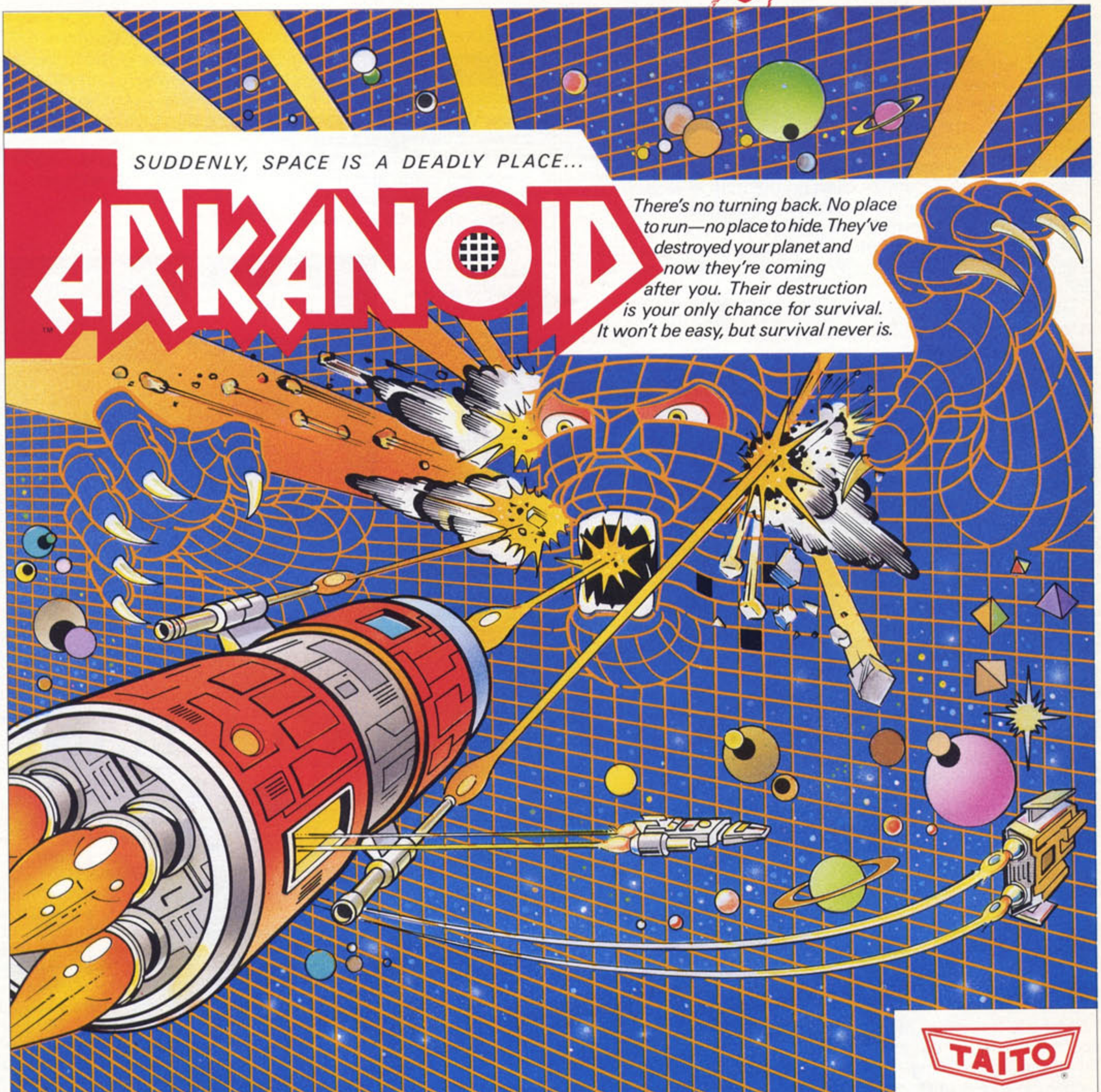
To order the rule book for your inspection please send $2.00 with your name and address to

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APPLE, C-64/128, IBM.
AMIGA, ATARI ST.



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Inside the Industry

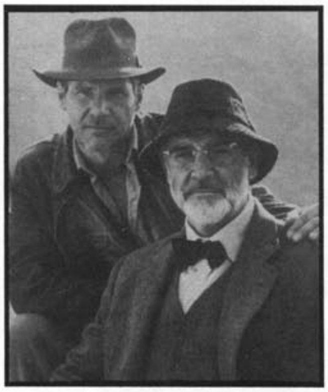
News, Notes and Quotes From the Computer Entertainment Industry

CGW Uncovers "Indy Quotient"

In an exclusive unveiling, CGW was shown highlights of (and given the plot to) the upcoming **Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade** movie, as well as given a detailed look at the computer game based on the movie. More detailed coverage will be printed in our June issue (coinciding with the release of the movie). For now, we can tell you that the game will contain both an adventure and an action track. Those who prefer one genre over another can, to a degree, make decisions that lead to either action or adventure sequences. The game's scoring system will be based on an Indy Quotient. Essentially, you will be given the same choices that Indy has in the movie and be graded on how you respond/react (Indy doesn't always make the "perfect" choice in the movie. Can you do better? That is what the Indy Quotient measures.) According to designer Noah Falstein, about 80% of the movie can be found in the game. Note that **Lucasfilm** will also be developing, along with their European division, a straight action game based on the movie for the C-64, Amstrad, etc. The adventure/action game under development at Lucasfilm in San Rafael will be released first for the IBM.

That's Not Wright!

CGW has belatedly learned that Wright Computer, a



mail order software firm which has been advertising in CGW and elsewhere, may be out of business. Repeated attempts to contact the company have been unsuccessful. We continue to investigate. Any readers who can offer additional information are invited to call (714) 535-4435 collect.

Microprose Reveals Future Games

CGW's editorial staff recently invaded the halls of **Microprose** in order to get an exclusive look at three of their upcoming products. *Sword of the Samurai* is the next product in the *Pirates* genre of action/adventure. In a departure from the earlier game, however, the new one will include NPCs which are not only rivals, but "doing their own thing for their own reasons" simultaneously with the player character's machinations. The "dueling" interface has been redesigned since *Pirates* and will be more intuitive (the joystick movement is what happens on the screen) and the "Battle" sequences follow a miniatures paradigm in a quick and simple real-time wargame. Morale will be a significant, if not overriding, factor in the battle sequences. Also different from the initial game in the series, there will be scenario options in addition to the "campaign" game.

M-1 Tank Platoon will be the first of the recent wave of tank simulations to offer realistic tank platoon battles. The weapons systems reflect careful modeling (including laser targeting, and ammo types) and the geomorphic map system lends itself to numerous encounters. The graphics are fast and liquid, offering realistic perspectives. The scenarios will cover such classic tactical problems as: defending a position, cautiously advancing, and attempting a "Schwerpunkt"-style breakthrough. The research, thanks to the "Freedom of Information Act," is painstakingly thorough. The CGW staff is very excited about the product. It's our kind of game with intriguing tactical options, super graphics, and enough non-stop action to rivet players to their seats for hours.

F-15 Strike Eagle II is currently in early-to-mid development. If all goes as planned, *F-19 Stealth Fighter* terrain should be interchangeable with the new F-15 game. The VGA palette may be the most remarkable color we've seen in a flight simulator and the features of the company's latest games utilizing 3-D graphics will be included. Why is the company revamping this flagship product? According to graphics wizard, Andy Hollis (*F-19 Stealth Fighter*), "I was getting embarrassed by the fact that we were still selling tons of *F-15* and it didn't reflect what we can do." This thought was seconded by **Microprose** co-founder and design ace, Sid Meier, "*F-15* is as well-known as **Microprose**, so we want to make sure it represents us well."

CD-I, We Hardly Knew You!

Although a Philips representative has stated that more than 60 CD-I (Compact Disc Interactive) titles and under development, many industry insiders believe that CD-I has lost its window of opportunity. The much-vaunted 68000-based entertainment machine is behind the promised schedule and Sony has shifted its full support to **Microsoft**'s CD-Rom-XA (extended architecture). Now, lower end machines like the PC Engine, expected to debut in the U.S. in August and the Fujitsu Towns Machine (386-based with CD-ROM-XA) on the high end may undo CD-I.

Cinemaware Purchases Mirrorsoft Licenses

After the April, 1989 issue of CGW went to press, **Mindscape** and **Mirrorsoft** backed off the reported licensing agreement. **Cinemaware** purchased the rights to the *Image Works* line and will market *Speedball* in the U.S., rather than **Mindscape**. **Mindscape**'s rationale for retreating from the joint venture was to retrench and focus on its own products which are in development: *Gauntlet II* and *Star Trek: The Final Frontier*.

What Do The "Sim"ple Folk Do?

Maxis' "Sim City" City Simulator

by Johnny L. Wilson

Stanislaw Lem couldn't have known what creative forces he would unleash when he told the story of an exiled tyrant who was provided with an imaginary city in a box. The lesson to be learned from the story was that behavior patterns hold true from environment to environment, since the tyrant proceeded to oppress the citizens in the box, just as he had oppressed his subjects in the past.



TITLE:	Sim City
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, C-64/128 IBM, and Macintosh
REVIEWED:	Amiga
PRICE:	Mac $49.95, Amiga $44.95, C-64 $29.95
DESIGNER:	Will Wright
PUBLISHER:	Maxis Software Lafayette, CA

Will Wright, creator of *Raid On Bungling Bay*, was fascinated by the idea of that simulacrum, the city in the box described in Lem's "The Seventh Sally," that he started work on a C-64 program which would accomplish just that. Using his program, users could zone for commercial, industrial, and residential development; build roads, mass transit, airports, public services, and seaports; and make political decisions regarding the future of simulated towns, cities, capitols, metropolises, and megalopolises. The programming was completed in its basic form in 1986, but it was a product in search of a market until **Maxis** developed it for the Macintosh and presented it to **Broderbund** for distribution. **Broderbund** challenged the design team to add city management scenarios in order to make it more of a game. Now, players can attempt to untangle traffic snarls in Bern, Switzerland; manage Rio De Janeiro after a major flood; lead Tokyo while it is besieged by a "B" movie monster; rebuild San Francisco after a major earthquake; restore Hamburg after the bombing; solve the crime/unemployment problem in urban Detroit; and react to a nuclear meltdown in Boston. As nice as the scenarios are, they are not anywhere near as compelling as designing your own. All of us in the office have focused on designing our own cities. Why play with someone's used Chevy when you can build your own customized Ferrari?

Since the game uses an American Urban Architecture model, it offers a realistic approach to city planning. So realistic, in fact, that a paper describing the use of *SimCity* as a dynamic model for urban planning will be presented at a conference of city planners in August. Dynamic is exactly the right word for this product. There is constant strategy involved in placement of zones, road building, political decision-making, and damage control. Add to this the chrome of an animated city with changing demographics and skyline coupled with an annual poll regarding how the mayor is doing (and what the citizens ("sims") think the major problems are) and you have an extremely addictive product. Each member of the CGW editorial staff has their own city and we have established our own file of hardcopy maps to use during our sessions of kibitzing with each other about which city is the best to live in. Each step of growth reflects a great sense of accomplishment and each of us wants an attractive city map to point to.

The program itself is actually two programs in a multi-tasking environment. The player sees the Editor, the interface/map maker where the player clicks and drags icons in order to set features on the map and pulls down menus to set tax rates or view maps/graphs which measure particular growth patterns. At the same time, the actual simulator runs in the background calculating the effects of various decisions and using a common message area within the program to relay important changes and events to the Editor. Therefore, the player makes a series of moves and often, even before he or she is finished with those moves, buildings are erected or traffic is flowing. These updates are thrilling to watch.

Note that there is a slight problem with the menu item which allows players to query the property value of their zones. They only measure as high (wealthy) or low (slum) value property. This problem exists only in the Mac 1.0 version and will be corrected in Mac 1.1 and in the coming ports. You can get around the problem by using the symbols on the map and the terrain card provided with the game to monitor this value instead of relying on the query feature.

Population Bomb

The name of the game is planned growth. In order to have the most successful possible city, there must be a solid balance between population, industrialization, and commercialization. Early on in the game, the emphasis will be on creating a power plant, providing housing, and developing industry. This is the first priority. It takes both an industrial and residential tax base to get a city going. Later, the emphasis should shift to commercial development. Roughly speaking, industry represents external economy (exporting to other locations) and commerce represents internal economy (i.e. service-based).

Population is a two-edged sword, however. Although fast population growth benefits the tax base, high densities of population cause a deterioration in quality of life due to such factors as crime, traffic, and pollution. If growth is allowed to continue unchecked, those fashionable suburbs intended to be expensive homes may turn into high-rise apartments. Cries of anguish have rung through the CGW office suite on more than one occasion as one of us has cried out, "Oh, no! My prime residential area just went condo!" There is a way to avoid this, however. When the residential zone is improved to your satisfaction, simply bulldoze one square of the zone and build a park. This sends a signal to the simula-

tion that no further development may take place in that zone. Building parks accomplishes more than acting as a "No Growth" campaign, however. Building parks near residential areas also tends to reduce crime and increase property value.

Mass (Transit) Appeal

In order to get the population of your city to their work and the city's marketplace, some provision for commuting must be made. The design team admits a bias toward rail-based mass transit. Not only is mass transit more efficient than a traditional road system in terms of traffic handled, but it does not pollute. In fact, where cities have traffic/pollution problems, the addition of rail lines will significantly reduce pollution.

Do not make the mistake of simply building rail lines over the top of roads, however. This does not take the traffic burden off the road network, because the simulator still considers them as roads. Players must bulldoze the existing roads and add rails in order to receive full benefit from the transit lines.

Creative Bookkeeping

Some players, particularly at the higher difficulty levels, may find that finding funding to fuel their city's growth is tough to do. There are two quick fixes for this, "Banzai" taxation and Embezzlement. In "Banzai" taxation, the mayor raises the tax rate to its maximum 20% in December. The taxes are collected at this rate in January of the following year. If the rate is left at the maximum level, people and corporations will start to desert the city. If the mayor lowers the rate to zero per cent, it will fool the populace enough that growth will continue at a fast pace. Players should not forget to reset the tax base at a positive percentage prior to the end of December, however, or they will not collect any funds at all. This technique could be utilized on an annual basis, but we recommend it only as a quick fix (particularly when disasters strike). At press time, Maxis was considering a change in the rules that would not allow "Banzai" taxation for future versions of *Sim City*.

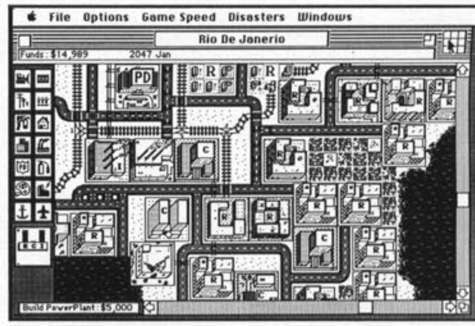
Embezzlement doesn't require much maneuvering. On the Macintosh and Amiga, the player simply holds down the shift key and types "Fund." Then, when he or she clicks on the bulldozer icon, $10,000 will be added to the city's resources. On the C-64/128, pressing the F1 key raises funds by $4,000. We avoid this quick fix of financial trouble, but it is there if a player gets desperate enough.

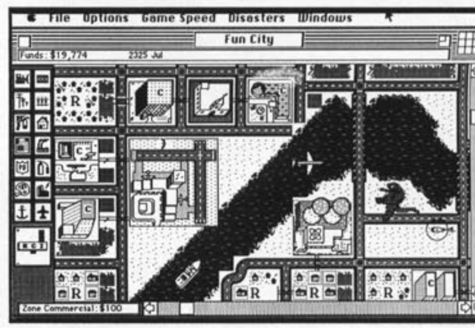
Crash, Burn & Die

One of the major elements in inter-city commerce is air travel and/or cargo handling. *SimCity* allows players to build airports and seaports to simulate this facet of economic growth and interaction. There is a major drawback to both of these major developments: potential for disaster. We wait until our cities demand an airport because the plane crashes are simply much too frequent. In version 1.1, the designers hope to allow players to select the frequency of disasters. In one game, the present reviewer had an airport for only four months of game time before a plane crashed into the airport itself and demolished it. Our editor-in-chief experienced five crashes in six months in one of his cities. These crashes occurred in spite of the fact that we had carefully followed the advice in the manual about placing the airport outside of populated areas and next to large bodies of water.

Seaports also present problems. Since the shipping lanes are established arbitrarily by the program, ships may have a tendency to crash into the same bridge support or run aground in the same bulldozed coastal square, time after time. The terrain editor (which will be marketed separately) is supposed to let players edit their own shipping lanes. That should solve this problem.

On the Mac Plus, there is a bug in version 1.0 which causes the program to "lock up" on occasion. It has been corrected in 1.1. Another bug relates to loading a "saved" game. On the Mac, your tax and income rate will be set to zero when you load the saved city, so it is best to save in December so that you do not lose income. In the meantime, we recommend that players archive their cities at regular intervals (e.g. every five years of game time or so) under different names.





Godzilla Is An Ecologist

Although the monster which attacks a city is not named, there is something of a resemblance between the "B" movie monster of the '50s and the monstrous reptile in *SimCity*. Godzilla in the movies was rather random in his destruction, but the monster in *SimCity* has a purpose. He tends to avoid parks and usually heads right for the heavy industry. The bigger the city, the longer he stays around. Therefore, it pays to landscape your cities if you don't want to have to fool with damage control after the Environmental Protection Agency - Lizard Division gets through with your city. Tornadoes tend to stay longer in larger cities, as well, but we are unaware of any contingency related to that disaster.

Avoidance of Entropy

One final word of warning. Entropy is a biological and sociological phenomenon. Everything that is not growing tends to decay. *SimCity* takes the laws of entropy seriously. In time, developed zones begin to erode. A successful mayor will embark upon urban redevelopment at an appropriate time (usually by the 21st century). It is the responsibility of the player/mayor to stay on top of the city and nurture it.

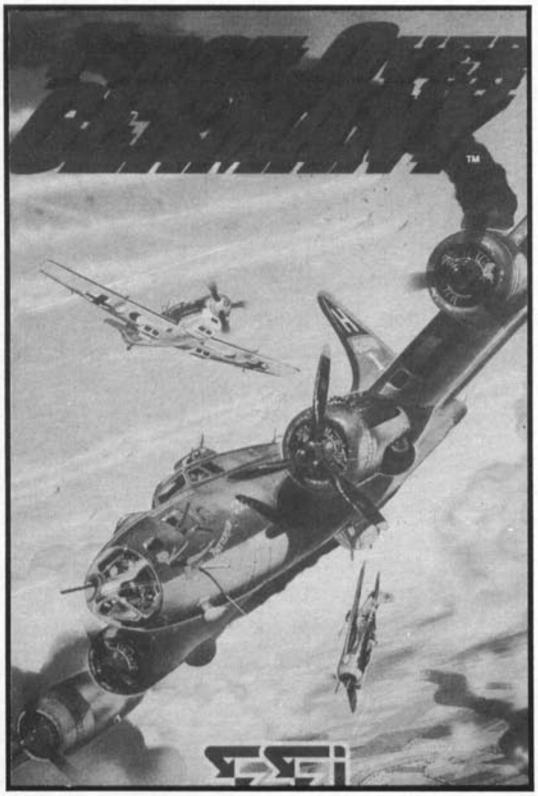
SimCounty, SimState

The simulation is becoming so popular and so many groups of friends have become as avid in developing their cities as those of us at CGW that **Maxis** is considering a *SimCounty* product. This one would allow players to put all their cities on the same map, in the same county, and would, presumably, allow political interaction to occur. If one city was heavily polluting the county, the other cities might gang up on the first and put political and/or economic pressure on the offending city. All we can say is, "Buy this game. We want them to make lots of money so they'll develop SimCounty, SimState, SimNation, SimPlanet, SimUniverse . . . billions and billions of games!" **CGW**

FIRST OVER GERMANY

by Hosea Battles

As our B-17 started the attack run on the industrial center of Lille, the fighters which had plagued us for miles broke off the action. We soon found out why as flak began bursting all around us. Suddenly, a B-17 on the left of the formation began to fall earthward as its left wing blew apart. This was the most critical and dangerous part of the mission, the bombing run itself. We had to stay straight and keep our planes level in order to drop our bombs on target. Unfortunately, the enemy anti-aircraft gunners now had our range and altitude! Our already crippled craft shuddered under the impact of another hit! Both the number two and four engines were windmilling. I finally heard the welcome "Bombs Away" sounded by our bombardier. Closing the bomb bay doors, I could now begin turning the craft. Before we could make our escape, however, the plane shuddered from an impact and explosion on our left wing. Our number one engine was completely destroyed. We began to lose altitude, so I quickly gave the "Bail Out!" order before we fell too far earthward.



TITLE:	First Over Germany
SYSTEMS:	Apple II, C-64/128, and IBM
REVIEWED ON:	C-64/128
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	John Gray
PUBLISHER:	Strategic Simulations, Inc. Mountain View, Ca

Such is the action to be encountered in **SSI**'s newest release and sequel to *B-24, First Over Germany*. It is a simulation that covers the actual missions flown by the 306th Bomb Group. It takes players through their training up through twenty-five combat missions, each consistent with what a pilot might have flown in the historical situation. The player plays the part of the pilot of one of the B-17s assigned to the group.

The Sound and The Fury (Game Presentation)

Sound is very important to this simulation. Would-be pilots can hear the hum of the engines throughout the game. If an engine is hit, the player will immediately be able to tell from the change in the sound. Another nice touch is the sound of the enemy fighters as they pass by the B-17s on their attack runs.

The graphics, using routines from **Polarware**'s *The Graphics Magician*, are not cutting edge. They are viewpoint oriented, depending on what is necessary to game play. For example, during a fighter attack, the player will view the fighter from the gunner's point-of-view. The angle will be different, depending on which gunner was initially chosen. The fighters increase in size as they get closer and decrease as they fly by. At another point in the game, players see the B-17 formation and ground from an overhead view. This view portrays a ten mile diameter and comes complete with clouds moving across the screen. Whenever the plane enters a cloud, however, the view switches to the cockpit view where players see the B-17 they are following in formation. Another nice touch is the bursting flak over the city which gets heavier as the bombers approach the target.

Crash landings are inevitable. This is illustrated on the overhead view by means of a dramatic explosion. Then, the screen shifts to a display of the wrecked B-17, complete with a message window which describes the condition of each crew member.

Another dramatic screen occurs during the bail out sequence. The B-17 is pictured at the top of the screen and each individual crew member is shown jumping out of the aircraft, falling for a short time, having his parachute unfold, and floating off the screen. A message describing the condition of each crew member soon follows to indicate if he survived the crash or not.

Cockpit (Game Controls and Play Mechanics)

Control of the B-17 is primarily joystick-driven, but utilizes the keyboard for special functions like: powering up the engine, raising and lowering the landing gear, opening and closing the bomb bay doors, and bailing out. Each engine is individually controlled in case you have to feather or windmill one because of damage.

After the player chooses his crew, game play begins with pilot training. The training consists of eight training missions. In the first three, you learn the basics, especially how to compensate for wind drift. The next five involve the transition to the home base of Thurleigh England with stops at four bases for refueling.

Once at Thurleigh, players get their first combat mission. They are to bomb the industrial center at Lille, France. Pilots are given the formation altitude and bombing altitudes. The correct number and pounds of bombs are automatically loaded on the craft, so all a player has to do is take off, form up, and leave the English shores. That is easier said than done and it won't be long until the enemy fighters attack in droves. If they don't attack right away, there is some real-time deadtime in the program, but once the bomber group nears the target, the action gets hot! Fortunately for the average player, the B-17 can take a lot of punishment. This

(Continued on page 51)

Circle Reader Service #31 »

Are you Ready for the Future?

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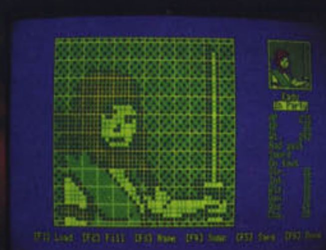
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CGW's Top Ad Award Winners



The people have spoken! The winners have been declared! Last January Computer Gaming World held its first annual TOP AD Awards. CGW advertisers took the opportunity to "strut their stuff" for our readers and other advertisers.

The top finishers in the contest were **New World Computing** for their full page ad on *Might and Magic II* and **First Row Software** for their fractional page ad covering three of their products.

All advertisers in the January issue (#55) were eligible to win awards which were determined by the vote of our readership. CGW readers sent in over 500 ballots. Readers were asked to "consider the graphics, copy, and overall impact of the ads". The reader coming closest to picking the actual finish of the ads would be awarded $250 and a lifetime subscription to CGW.

A weighted scoring system gave 3 points to first place votes, 2 points to second place votes, and 1 point to third place votes.

The New World Computing ad for *Might & Magic II* told you clearly what you were getting and created a sense of adventure at the same time. Many readers pointed out that they want to see screen shots in advertisements. New World's ad had FIVE screen shots. **Accolade's** second place *Grand Prix Circuit* ad with the blonde babe had just two screen shots, but it also generated a sense of adventure for the heavily male readership, although not of the role-playing kind (fantasy maybe, but not the kind you find in computer games). Third place went to **Interplay** for their sinister and effective three-screen-shot *Neuromancer* ad.

The winning New World Computing ad was designed by inhouse personnel Jon Van Caneghem (designer of the game as well), his wife, Michaela, and Nicholas Beliaeff.

The voting for fractional sized ads drives home the fact that color ads outpull black and white ads. The only two color fractional ads in the issue placed first and second. **First Row Software** placed first with their *Take 3* half page ad. **XOR Corp.** placed second with their *Take The Challenge* ad. The composition of the First Row ad showing large box covers against an eye pleasing background color was effective. The use of color type also added to the impact of the ad. Third place went to Cyborg Games for their attractive hex-filled half page black and white ad on *The Next Empire*; gamers love hexes.

The winning First Row ad was designed by Joe Finisdore of "The Corporate Identity People", Philadelpia.

Randy W. Doyle of Tinker AFB, Oklahoma came closest to picking the correct winners by picking the first and second place winners in both the full and fractional catagories. We congratulate Randy. He will receive a check for $250 and a lifetime subscription to CGW!



Fractional Page Winners

1st: First Row
488 points

2nd: XOR Corp.
431 points

3rd: Cyborg Games
369 points

Full Page Winners

1st: New World
382 points

2nd:Accolade
255 points

3rd: Interplay
206 points

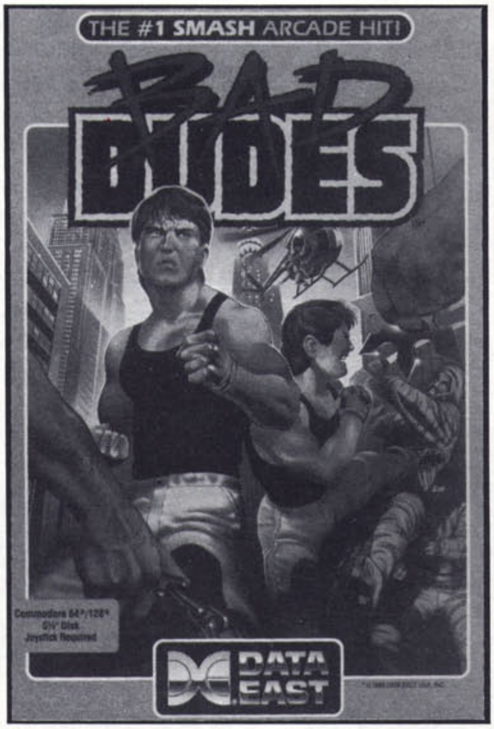


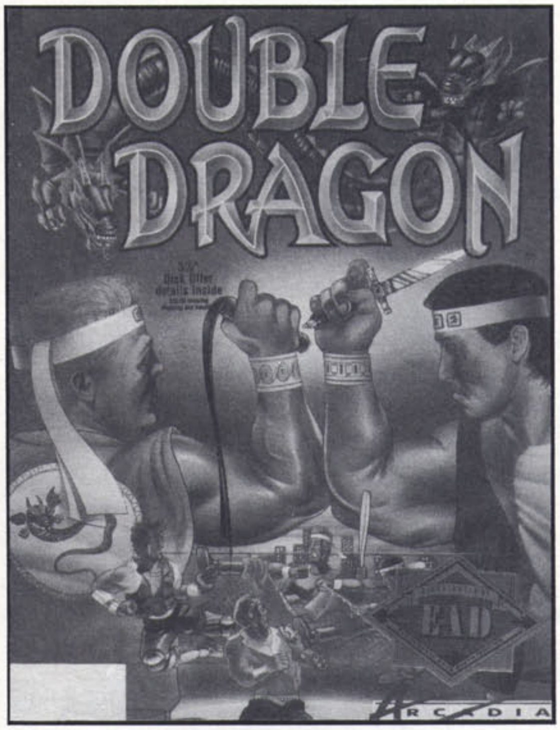
Street Lethal

A Trio of Vigilante Games

by David M. Wilson

Charles Bronson has been doing it in the *Death Wish* film series for years. The Guardian Angels have been both praised and cursed for doing it. Bernard Goetz went to jail for carrying a gun to do it with. What is it? Vigilantism! Taking it upon oneself to defend the public safety and morals without authorization.



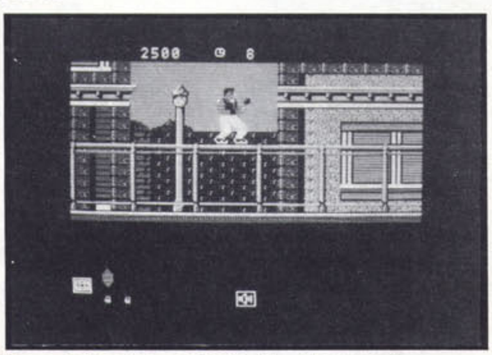


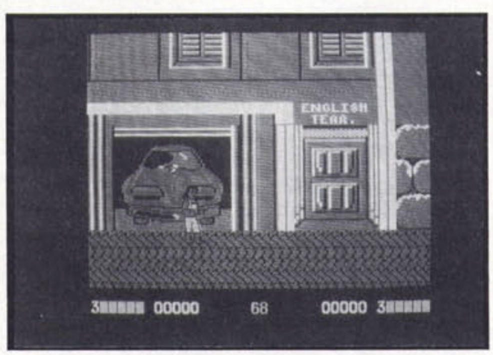
This is not only a popular theme in movies, books, and television, but it has also been carried over to the video arcade. Enter any video arcade and you are sure to see a high percentage of games which allow a player to utilize martial arts to fight street gangs and evil villains. A trio of these games are now available for the home computer: *Double Dragon*, *Renegade*, and *Bad Dudes*.

TITLE:	Bad Dudes
SYSTEMS:	Apple II (128K), C-64/128, IBM
REVIEWED:	Apple, IBM
PRICE:	$29.95 (C) $34.95 (Ap), $39.95 (I), and $44.95 (Am,ST)
PUBLISHER:	Data East San Jose, CA

TITLE: Double Dragon	
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, Atari ST C-64/128, IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-2
REVIEWED:	C-64/128
PRICE:	$34.95
PUBLISHER:	Arcadia Costa Mesa, CA

The big question in most arcade fan's minds will be "How good are the adaptations?" *Double Dragon* has been extremely popular in the coin-ops because of its great variety of moves. Of course, as one wag typed eloquently on a BBS system, "How will they ever get all of those moves into a joystick?" The truth is, they didn't. Oh, *some* of the moves are there, but players cannot reproduce all of the coin-op's action. In looking at both the Commodore and IBM versions, the IBM was certainly more like the coin-op version and allowed more flexibility. The C-64 version was a pale shadow of the original. The moves were not there, the character icon didn't move as freely, and one could not stand toe-to-toe with the bad guys and slug it out. Instead, it was necessary to adopt a hit and run policy: hit the thug, move away, return and clobber him, back off, and so forth. Also, the inevitable shrinking down of the graphics to accommodate the limited memory on the C-64 left me personally disappointed. I didn't really expect the game to be as good as the arcade version, but a bit more similarity would have helped.

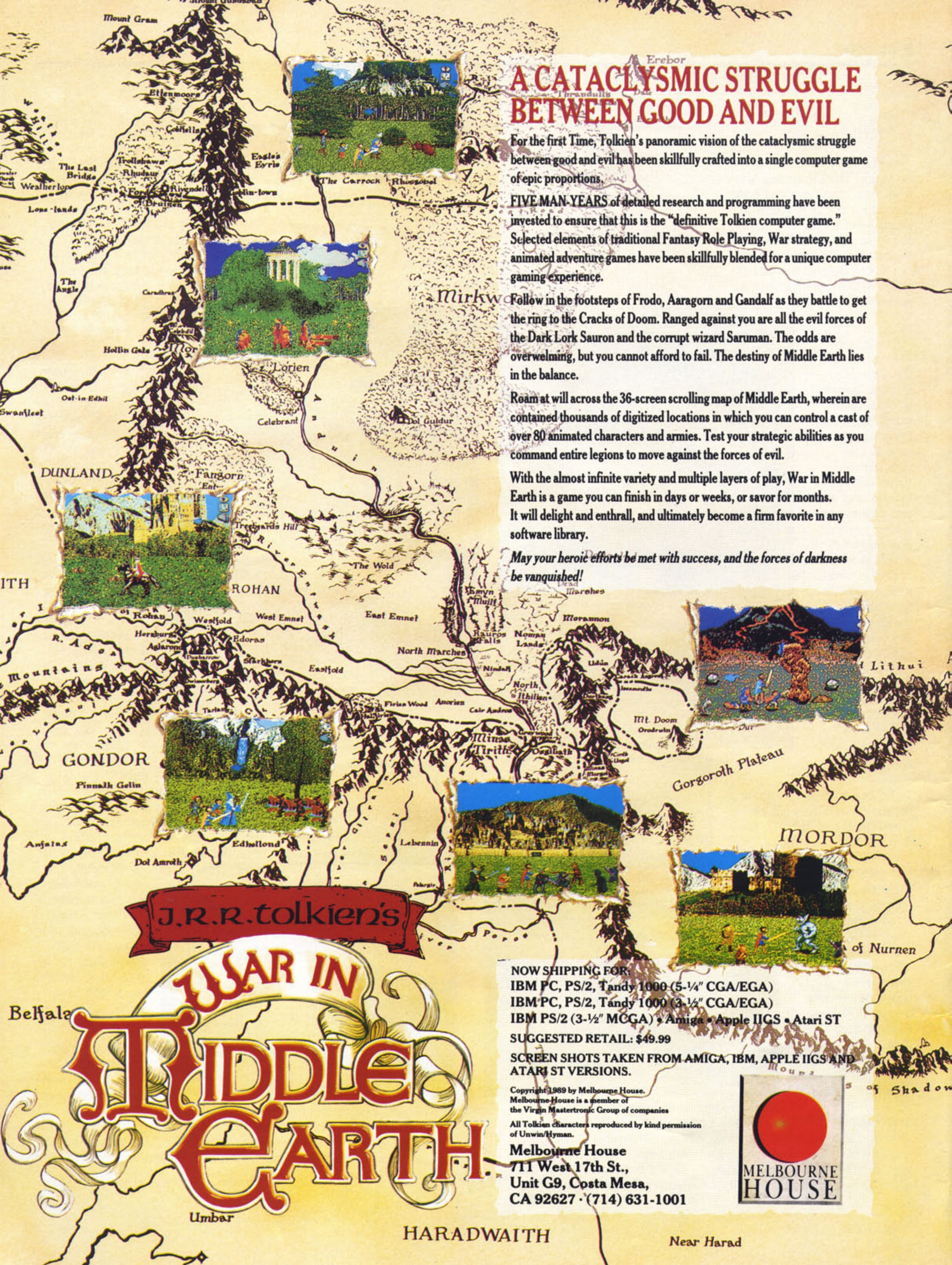




Players still fight the same characters, only now they can know their names by reading the instruction manual. Villains still wield baseball bats and whips, but the dynamite throwing thug is missing. At least, the "Big Boss" with the machine gun is still present. In the home versions, nine basic moves are available to defeat the villains, so players are not likely to become too tired of repetitive action. Also, the two player option in which partners bash the bad guys simultaneously is a feature which the personal computer version offers and **Nintendo** version does *not* have. The game is certainly easier when the two twin brothers, Billy and Jimmy Lee face the odds together rather than taking turns at fighting like the **Nintendo** program.

Renegade deletes the two-player option, but provides an even greater variety of villains and weapons than the arcade version. Unlike *Double Dragon*, however, players do not have the option of taking the bad guys' weapons after defeating them. Also, the assortment of gangs is more interesting than the group assembled in *Double*

(Continued on Page 26)



A CATACLYSMIC STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

For the first Time, Tolkien's panoramic vision of the cataclysmic struggle between good and evil has been skillfully crafted into a single computer game of epic proportions.

FIVE MAN-YEARS of detailed research and programming have been invested to ensure that this is the "definitive Tolkien computer game." Selected elements of traditional Fantasy Role Playing, War strategy, and animated adventure games have been skillfully blended for a unique computer gaming experience.

Follow in the footsteps of Frodo, Aaragorn and Gandalf as they battle to get the ring to the Cracks of Doom. Ranged against you are all the evil forces of the Dark Lork Sauron and the corrupt wizard Saruman. The odds are overwelming, but you cannot afford to fail. The destiny of Middle Earth lies in the balance.

Roam at will across the 36-screen scrolling map of Middle Earth, wherein are contained thousands of digitized locations in which you can control a cast of over 80 animated characters and armies. Test your strategic abilities as you command entire legions to move against the forces of evil.

With the almost infinite variety and multiple layers of play, War in Middle Earth is a game you can finish in days or weeks, or savor for months. It will delight and enthrall, and ultimately become a firm favorite in any software library.

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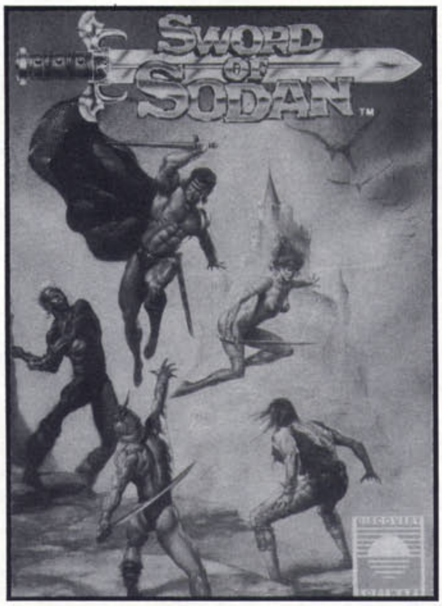
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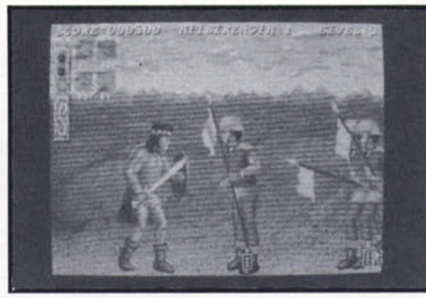
MELBOURNE HOUSE

Sodan Impact

Discovery Software's "Sword of Sodan"

by Kevin C. Rohrer





TITLE:	Sword of Sodan
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, IBM, IIGS
REVIEWED:	Amiga
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Soren Gronbech and Torben Larsen
PUBLISHER:	Discovery Software Annapolis, MD

Once Upon A Time . . .

The Northern Kingdoms were once peaceful. Then, Zoras the Necromancer, unleashed his army of evil spirits into the land. Zoras killed King Lordan and took over his castle, Craggamoore,—but not before Lordan had enabled his son, Brodan, and daughter, Shardan, to escape to a distant land. There, their grandfather (Sodan) raised them to avenge their father with an enchanted sword.

Discovery Software's *Sword of Sodan (SOS)* is an exciting new action game where one hacks-and-slashes across eleven levels of multi-screen excitement, faces the evil minions of Zoras, and beards the evil magician in his den. From the Dorian Vallejo (son of Boris) cover art to Julian LeFay's eerie soundtrack and the more than four megabytes worth of animation, *SOS* quickens the blood and stimulates the senses.

Equal Opportunity Avenger

One welcome aspect of *SOS* is the ability to play either a male (Brodan) or female (Shardan) character with no penalty in choosing one over the other. Players have five "lives" to defeat the villain. *[Ed: In the Amiga version, we found an "Easter Egg" in which players can receive an unlimited number of lives.]*

As each game level is loaded into memory, a map delineates the player's current location within the adventure. Then, a scroll describes in verse the events to be encountered in the upcoming level. Play commences and the player fights through several screens. Levels scroll horizontally from left to right as the player battles his/her way past adversaries and obstacles. Characters can walk, jump, or kneel, as well as use their sword to stab, slash, or strike downward. Unfortunately, characters may not digress from a straightforward linear path, even to sidestep obvious obstacles. The game would certainly have been stronger and the illusion of a three-dimensional world more effective if characters could have moved sideways.

During the action sequences, players see a side-view of the hero/heroine. Statistical displays are kept to the minimum: (hit strength, current score, and number of lives remaining). In addition, a bar graph denotes stamina and a smaller bar graph beneath each adversary displays the enemy's remaining strength.

Each level presents a new and increasingly difficult series of challenges to be mastered. First, he/she battles past the guards and through the city's gate. Then, he/she fights against the same type of guards, while spear points poke upward from under a balustrade. Another combat pits the character against a giant while barrels roll toward him/her. Another battle requires passage through a cemetery replete with dozens of zombies which must be vanquished while the character jumps over unidentified round objects rolling right at him/her.

Fortunately, one of four types of magic potions can be picked up on each level: extra life, increased hit strength, Magic Zapper (kills the first monster encountered), and a Power Shield (a magic force field lasting thirty seconds). When picked up, these potions are displayed as icons, labeled "F1" through "F4" respectively, and may be activated with the appropriate function key.

Sights and Sounds Galore

The biggest plus for *SOS* would have to be its graphics and sound. In many action games, each level is only one screen in size and the objects and characters to be found within them are small. In *SOS*, Brodan and Shardan fill the screen, their musculature is well-defined, and movement suffers no apparent jerkiness.

On the Amiga, all sounds are digitized and in stereo. The background noises are different on each level. In the first level, crickets chirp outside the city gate. In the cemetery encounter, the howling wolves sound so realistic that one of this writer's dogs heard the howling and came to investigate. Characters groan in pain when struck and the clank of metal striking metal accompanies the parrying of an opponent's weapon.

Nothing Is Perfect

SOS has some weak points, however. First, there are only eleven levels to be conquered and a single degree of difficulty at that. It would have made the game wear longer to have the ability to adjust the difficulty level upward. Second, the game may be a bit too blood-thirsty for the younger crowd. Whenever a sword strikes someone, a bloody wound appears. Also, the giant is killed by decapitation, not a pretty sight for the squeamish. Third, it seems that in these days of document based protection, there should be no need to save any information to the original program disk.

Final Confrontation

SOS is a quality product from beginning to end. The excellent graphics, sound, and action will keep players of all ages on the edge of their seats. **CGW**

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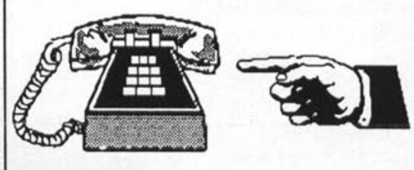
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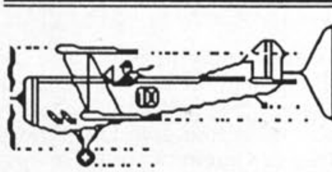
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(Continued from page 21)

Street Lethal

Dragon. For instance, *Renegade* players must face, among others: a subway gang, a motorcycle gang called the "Angels of Death" (how original), a group of women armed with clubs and whips, and a group of thugs armed with sharp razors whose leader has a gun. The important arcade "feel" is carried over into the personal computer versions of *Renegade*. Playing *Renegade* makes the player feel like he is trained in martial arts. His movements are smoother and faster than in the other games.



TITLE:	Renegade
SYSTEMS:	Apple II, Amiga, C-64/128, IBM, and ST
REVIEWED:	C-64/128
PRICE:	$34.95 (Ap,C), $39.95 (Am,I,ST)
PUBLISHER:	Taito Canada

One important strategy to remember in *Renegade* is fighting with one's back to the wall. After all, if the goons can't get behind you, you will only have to worry about what is in front of you. Also, be aware that even though the creeps with the clubs can do the most damage to your character, they are actually wimps. A couple of punches and a jump-kick will usually knock them down.



Data East adds their arcade hit, *Bad Dudes*, to the melting pot of martial art vigilante games. The IBM version converted well from the coin-arcade machine. The Apple II conversion suffered greatly due to the limited graphics capability of the 128k machine. This is one game that Apple II owners will have to live without. The C64/128 version was unavailable for review at press time.

The premise behind *Bad Dudes* is that the president has been kidnapped and the player has been asked to rescue him. It's a delightful romp across the screen as players attempt to fight their way through the city to where the president is being held by an evil Dragon Ninja.

Bad Dudes, like *Double Dragon*, allows players a little help along the way with regard to weapons. While *Renegade* forces the player to fight only with hands and feet, the other two allow use of liberated enemy weapons. If the player's "Bad Dude" can defeat the red garbed ninjas, they can amass helpful items like offensive weapons and defensive aids (energy drinks and extra time).

One of the Dragon Ninja's super warriors is placed at the end of each level, much like the "boss" at the end of each *Renegade* level. When battling it out with the bad guys in *Bad Dudes*, players should remain in the center of the screen as much as possible. In this way, you avoid enemies that are off-screen, but can still harm you should you venture too near the edge. Fortunately, *Bad Dudes* does not require the constant hit and move technique necessary in the other two games. Instead, it is more advantageous to the player to force the enemy to come to him.

This reviewer found the IBM version of *Bad Dudes* to be the best of the trio with regard to both graphics and action. On the C-64, the graphics of *Double Dragon* are superior to *Renegade*, but this is a trade-off since it also takes forever to load. The slow access makes the **Epyx** *Fastload* or **Cinemaware** *Warp Speed* cartridges almost a requirement for the game. *Renegade*, to its credit, loads fast enough with the on-disk "fast loader."

Still, in spite of the graphics edge held by *Double Dragon*, *Renegade* offers more intensity than *Double Dragon*. Part of this is because of its use of a time limit. Players have a minimal amount of time to complete each level before they lose a life. It may be an old idea, but it works.

Showing off one's Kung Fu ability to computerized thugs may not be some people's idea of a clever game. Sometimes, though, we need a break from our more serious gaming pursuits. Even the most serious readers occasionally resort to pure escape literature. That's the idea with these games. For this reviewer, they make an excellent break from the tantalizing puzzles of more complex strategy or adventure games. **CGW**



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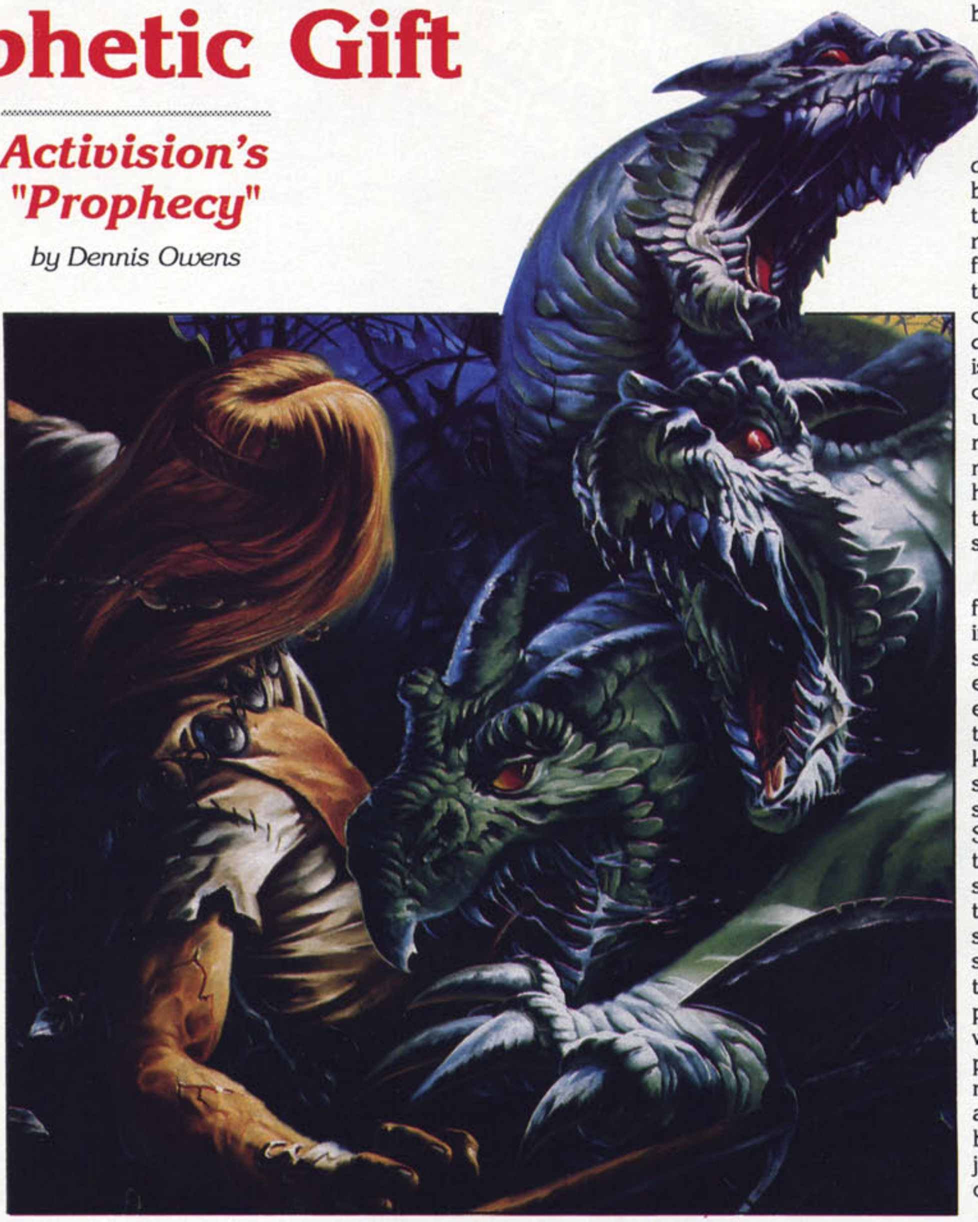


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Prophetic Gift

Activision's "Prophecy"

by Dennis Owens



Simply put, *Prophecy* is the most exciting role-playing game this reviewer has ever played on the home computer;. Its combination of fast-action, character/NPC interaction, questing, character development and graphics is reminiscent of almost every game which has ever been written in the genre and, at the same time, unlike any of them. Prophecy is what most of the others should have been like.

Although its scope is not quite as magnificent as that of the *Ultima* series, *Prophecy* offers, nonetheless, a completely unique blend of arcade-level action, speed, and role-playing complexity and depth. Combat occurs in real time, with the monsters and NPCs moving independently of and simultaneously with your character. As soon as you enter a room, they come at you, whether slinging arrows, casting magical fireballs, or wielding their swords and it is up to your character's quickness and your nimble fingers to get out of the way, even as you move toward a more strategic location. While this may, initially, seem to encourage chaotic and overwhelmingly fast-paced gameplay, it is an indication of the balance in the game that such a revolutionary change in role-playing battle sequences adds a seamlessness to the fiction and a sense of realism unseen in any previous quest adventure.

TITLE:	Prophecy
SYSTEM:	IBM
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNERS:	Richard L. Seaborne Alan J. Murphy
PUBLISHER:	Activision Menlo Park, CA

Nermon: A Nice Place To Visit

The game is big (requiring 512K) and fast (since it uses very little disk access). In fact, it manages to jam so much in (*Gauntlet/Pool of Radiance* style graphics, *Gauntlet* paced game speed, *Ultima* level interactions, and an ease of play like no game ever written) by only allowing access to small portions of the seemingly boundless world at a time.

Progress is made by moving from one game area and its related quest to another. Shown top view, the whole world beyond those dingy dungeon walls is blacked out. Nevertheless, there is no mistaken movement from one game area to another without completing your quest. Each section is so thoroughly self-contained (at least, until you do not need it to be any more) that all you have to do is be sure to explore the entire section.

Each area is also further subdivided into individual screens (mentioned earlier), which are easily traversed (once the monsters are killed). Characters simply walk from one screen to the other. Such parceling off of the game might seem, at first thought, to impede seriously the suspension of disbelief in the world to be explored, but in this writer's gaming experience, there has never been more of a sense of there being a real world just beyond the edge of the next screen.

Everything in *Prophecy* adds to that belief: the graphics, the ease-of-movement (joystick- or keyboard-driven, they are equally effective and easily toggled back and forth), the manual (clear, precise, informative, and necessary as copy protection), and the storyline (wonderfully structured and tremendously reminiscent of *Star Wars*).

The game is well-balanced. Magic is useful, but you cannot lean on it. Use of weapons is also important, but, once again, it cannot always save your hide. The game's action is fast and lively, but not exhausting. Game speed can be adjusted and there are also respites within the game itself. Further, even though the action is in real-time, there is no place you have to be by a certain point in the

game to keep from automatically losing the game.





Prophecy can be played as an arcade game, allowing players to go around bashing monsters and collecting treasure to their heart's content, but its *real* magic is that the fiction is totally believable. Consistent and flashy, its early quests, while designed primarily to help your character build up strength and skills, are still related to the plot and the fact that great evil has taken over the land.

Revenge of the . . . Jedist?

It seems that your character is the son of a famous knight of years long past. Your father has hidden our hero, far from the reaches of the evil Krellane Empire, in a tiny, out-of-the-way village named CrissCross. Nervously, your cháracter and the villagers keep a wary eye out for any sign that the evil Empire has found you. One day, though, when the hero's presumed "father" ventures out with a few companions to investigate reports that the Empire's soldiers have been seen nearby, he does not return.

When CrissCross is destroyed, it becomes the hero's task to seek out Jed, the legendary leader of the resistance (whose followers are called "Jedists") and discover the character's real identity, his real father, who the Gendors are, and why they are so mean, strong, and ugly. (Hint: Do not attack the very first Gendor encountered.)

Magic in the game is simple and straightforward. Ten of a possible thirty spells can be "memorized"—that is, be typed onto a list accessible via the function keys. All the spells are immediately available, their names need only be included on the list. Certain magical prefixes, also available, allow the spells to be increased in power, but you may not have the spell points to cast them for a while.

Though spell points, like hit points, regenerate as time passes, spell point replacement is *very* slow. As your character increases in level, though, so, too, does the number of maximum spell points. Also, rumor has it that ancient books of arcane magic could increase one's understanding of the art, but such books have, surely, long since vanished.

To cast a spell, players simply press the corresponding function key. Simple, elegant—like the entire game. Almost everything you could possibly hope about how the game would operate is exactly the way it does. If you don't want to be chasing around at breakneck speed, having your throat cut before you take a step, you can slow the game down. If you don't like the treasure you've just gotten out of a chest—well, one of this writer's favorite tricks was to save the game (again, simply and easily) just before opening a chest. That way, if I didn't like the contents, I'd just reload the game and keep repeating the process until I did like the goodies.

Options allow players to set the machine speed, graphics level, joystick/keyboard control, and game speed. It does not take long to get comfortable in moving through the game and the game speed toggle must get the praise for that.

Yeah, But Why Can't I Sell It In Gobar?

Dozens of items can be found in the game—weapons, armor, and "whatnot"—but *Prophecy*'s only shortcoming is that, once you begin to pick up the treasure and you have outfitted your character as well as possible, there is nothing to do with the rest of the stuff. The only armory is the entire game will only *sell* you something, which is a shame because gold is valuable. By the end of the game, my character was a walking warehouse.

Also, the pre-set character might seem, at first, like an annoyance with all those pre-set skill levels. The truth is, however, that the character builds up so quickly and the gameplay is so smooth that you will most likely forget about those pre-set levels almost immediately. It won't take long—once you see your best friend bleeding by the side of the road and two slobbering, smelly goblins leering over him.

After a while, the only attributes you will worry about are your damage (amount of injury you can put onto a bad guy) and defense (armor class). Combat is primarily resolved by utilizing those two numbers versus the monsters' ratings in those areas. Of course, the hard part is actually hitting your target, since it will be moving. Not only do you see your hit points, but the screen also shows how many hit points your opponents have (a thoughtful touch).

Sometimes, it's better to Baenaturlik rather than to wade in with your sword waving.

The graphics, of course, in EGA mode, are excellent. Fireballs blaze, lightning bolts flash, and weapons slash. Your icon is brilliantly colored with armor and weapons that change dynamically with each different outfitting. Movement is sharp and turns are on the money.

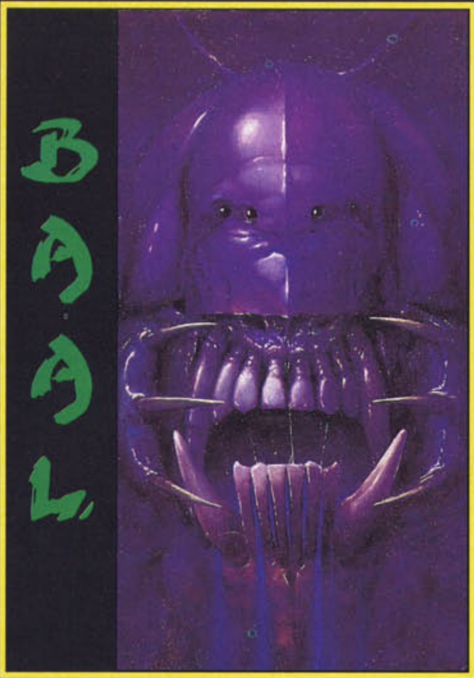
Interaction is accomplished by moving next to another icon and pressing "T." Chests open and other important events occur simply by moving adjacent to the proper space. Although the game includes a "Look" function (for searching), it is basically a superfluous command.

The most important hint is to go everywhere! There is no telling where a clue about your world will turn up. Also, it is significant that not every NPC is your enemy. Of course, if you happen to attack them first, you will make them dislike you very quickly.

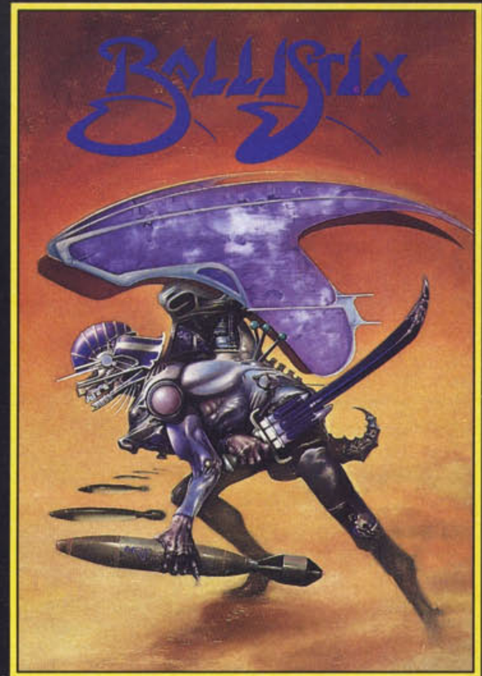
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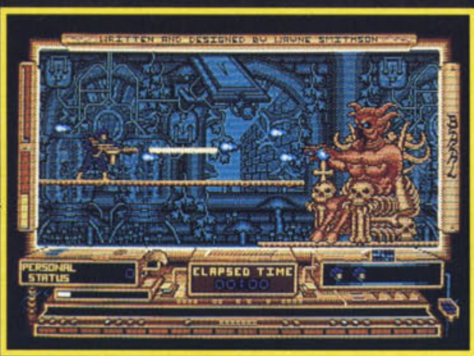
Though the Jedist philosophy seems to want to indicate some sort of code for your character to live by, nowhere is it necessary to do so (as, say, in *Ultima IV*).Finally, a warning is in order. I collapsed from exhaustion after my first three nights of play (and it's been a long time since that has happened). Then, common sense and the work week (along with my boss's disapproving frowns) set in. After that, I only spent every other single night staying up and playing the game. My wife, who is glad I've finished *Prophecy* so that our livelihood is no longer threatened, says the game is not to be recommended for schoolboys or anyone who has responsibilities.

For everyone else, though, for arcade enthusiasts, RPG nuts, and questhunters the world over, *Prophecy* must not be missed. It is a terrific game, a classic, and *maybe* the best around. **CGW**

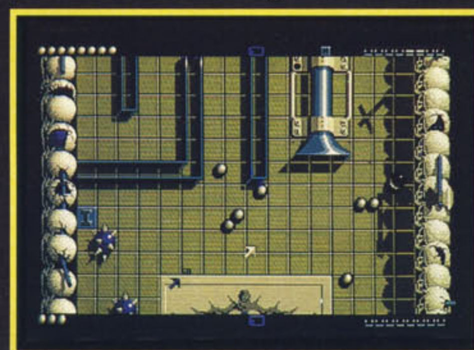












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Screen Shots from the Atari ST version

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Yup, it's a tough mission alright, but you might just win out with the right blend of co-operation, courage, laser-hot reflexes, tactical sense. . . and brains. The action is fast and furious in Captain Fizz, but if you can't work out the right tactics you'll both be dead meat.

There are 22 levels of savage and relentless action to battle through before you reach your objective, the central computer that's causing the evil infestation. You'll never get there, though, unless you put your heads together and co-operate; your buddy can't do it on his own, and neither can you. This is one program where even the easy games are hard. So remember — united you stand, but divided you fall. . .

Warning: this game is impossible to beat on your own.

Two joysticks required for two-player game.

Screen shots taken from the Atari ST version

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Ballistix is incredibly flexible, too. You can play against the computer or another player, set the speed if you can't stand the pace, define where the balls are fired and their velocity, rack up bonuses that will get you extra goals and then, at the end of an exhausting game, set your name in pride of place on the high-score table. And it's all played to the accompaniment of a throbbing sound-track and a crowd that applauds your every goal.

Ballistix is definitely not a game for wimps. It's tough, fast, challenging and incredibly competitive - in fact, it's just the kind of game you like.

Two joysticks required for two-player game

Screen Shots are from the Amiga version

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Guardians of Infinity

As Told By Scorpia

Warning: Although "The Scorpion's Tale" is a warm and comfortable tavern of the mind with a nice cozy fire of vibrant images, our resident storyteller conjures up illuminating hints about games. If the gentle reader eschews hints, let him beware!

Well, here we are, barrelling through spring into summer, the time when a grue's fancy turns to...hmm...maybe it's best not to go into that. Fred is hyper enough these days (grin). Anyway, have a seat, a cool drink (psst, Fred! Wake up! Customers!) and we'll talk about history: what was, what might have been, and what could be.

Guardians of Infinity: To Save Kennedy is billed as an "interactive strategy text adventure," but this is not by any means your standard adventure game. The only one I can think of that comes close is **Infocom**'s old *Suspended*, but the resemblance is superficial at best.

The action is handled entirely through conversations. There is, with a couple of exceptions, no object gathering and no puzzle-solving in the usual sense. After years of playing standard adventure games, this one takes a little getting used to.

The basic premise is that John F. Kennedy should not have been assassinated in Dallas on November 22nd, 1963. His death was a forced event, something never meant to happen in the normal flow of history. This diverting of the true time line causes "chronal abnormalities" to occur and the very fabric of time itself begins to unravel.

By the year 2087, the problem has reached epic proportions, and the existence of all reality is in danger of collapsing and vanishing. Dr. Alan Cooper, a brilliant scientist, has traced the problem to the assassination in Dallas. With a dedicated band of five people, including his daughter, Cooper steals a time machine. His hope is to go back in time and prevent the murder from taking place, thus restoring history to its proper sequence and putting an end to the chronal abnormalities.

The game begins with the time machine appearing outside Fort Worth one week before the assassination. The player takes the role of Alan Cooper. Cooper does not leave the time sphere at all, except in the end game (if you're lucky enough to reach it). His function is essentially managerial; he tells the agents where to go and whom to see.

This is the basic feature of Guardians: interviews with prominent politicians and officials of the government, all of whom are (or were) actual people of the time. Cooper's goal is to obtain a private interview with JFK and convince him not to take the motorcade through Dallas. Since it isn't, of course, possible to just saunter into the White House and see the president, Cooper must "go through channels." Hence, the interviews.

The procedure itself is a simple one, although many traps and pitfalls await the unwary. You simply tell an agent who to see, when to see him (or her), and where to see the person. Typical commands would be "Iris, see Humphrey at home in Washington tomorrow at 9 PM" or "Carl, see Stevenson at his New York office at 4 PM."

Your agents always want to know whether or not to tell the interviewee that they are from the future. This is a delicate point. Unless the agent can provide some sort of definitive proof, it is usually best to say, "No." They will be getting into enough trouble as it is.

Every so often, the agents report back on their success or failure in carrying out their assignments. A particular person may have been unavailable. In that case, your agent asks what you want him (or her) to do next. You can give them a new assignment, tell them to wait and call back at a certain time, or recall them to the time sphere.

On the other hand, your agent may have been fortunate enough to see the subject. At these times, the agent reports back on how things went and will tell you if an appointment has been made with someone higher up in the chain of command. When this happens, the agent always asks if he or she should keep the appointment. Some appointments are better left unkept.

Those are the essentials of game play. However, before you boot up, sit down and go through the docs thoroughly, especially the spiral-bound manual. The manual, an amazing achievement in dedicated research, is absolutely vital to successful completion of the game.

It contains tips on playing the game, dossiers of your agents, a day-by-day itinerary of Kennedy's last week, schedules of over 100 real-life people for that week, as well as several pages in the back that are chock full of all sorts of interesting (and occasionally very personal) information on some of these people. This is the information that your agents use to prove they are from the future.

Once you've gone through the manual a few times, you're ready to plan out your strategy. Since the really top people are not directly accessible, you have to decide which of the "lower echelon" to send your agents to visit.

This is where you need to have a lot of patience. Not all agents work out with all the politicians and much of the game is played through trial and error. If you find that, for instance, Alex, doesn't get anywhere with a particular person, try someone else.

Earlier, I mentioned pitfalls and there are quite a few in the game. For one thing, some of the people visited will be, to say the least, highly suspicious of how your agents came by their information on the assassination plot. Your agent could head to an interview and find himself (or herself) arrested. Any time this happens, the game is over, since none of the time travellers can stay in 1963 beyond midnight of the 22nd.

Another danger is the Highfather (read the novelette that comes with the game to find out more about him). A total maniac, it was he who arranged the assassination, knowing full well what would happen because of it. He has agents in this time period who are working to stop your agents, making life more difficult all around.

The minions of the Highfather will do what they can to foil your efforts. They may kill your agents or make anonymous phone calls that get them into trouble. The only thing you can do about these agents is avoid them. Generally, if you find an interview (or attempted interview) is interfered with by a Highfather agent, it means that that section of the game is a dead end. Give it up and try another route. The same is true of any interview that leads to the arrest of any of your agents. So, be careful out there!

There are some people you will never get to see. For instance, anyone out of

(Continued on page 34)

« Circle Reader Service #36

Silent Running

by Lt. H. E. Dille

You lost the passive line of bearing almost three minutes ago when you ordered the Los Angeles below the thermal layer and increased speed. The sonarman sits hunched over his console to your right, watching the world around the thin pressure hull with his ears. The air in the compartment is flat and compressed with palatable tension, an odor the air scrubbers cannot erase despite the length of the patrol. Feeling the time is right, you order the engine to stop and commence a slight up bubble drift to periscope depth.



"Passing layer depth, Captain."

"Very well," you reply, feeling suddenly naked without the temperature inversion which masked your high speed approach. The cant of the deck begins to diminish as you approach the ordered depth and your gaze is fixed upon the sonarman, once more. He sits transfixed by sound, his eyes vacant and useless for his chosen profession. Suddenly, his fingers begin to fly across the signal analyzer.

TITLE:	688 Attack Sub
SYSTEMS:	IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	John Ratcliff, Paul Grece, and Randall Breen
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

"Captain, we've still got the contact . . discrete frequencies indicate possible Slava Cruiser!"

"Up scope," you order. As the scope breaks the surface, you do a quick 360 degree scan, lingering but an extra second on your chosen victim.

"Down scope. Confirmed Slava. Load tubes one and two."

"Targeting point, Captain?"

"Negative! This will be a passive attack . . . call range at 6.5 nautical miles . . . fire when ready."

"Aye, Aye, Sir."

The seconds seem an eternity until the boat shudders with a faint whoosh, the hunter loosing the arrow. Almost immediately, the sonarman turns to you with widened eyes, his ears seeing more than he wishes.

"Hydrophone effects . . . close aboard, aft!"

Before you can react, the boat rocks violently as the first torpedo rips through the hull into the reactor compartment. The blast knocks you from your feet, your head striking the corner of the plot table as you fall. The hunter has become the hunted, the cycle is complete.

Electronic Arts' latest offering, *688 Attack Sub*, places players in the role of Commanding Officer on either a *Los Angeles* class or a Soviet *Alfa* class submarine. As an unnatural predator of the deep, your mission is to support state policy objectives in whatever manner dictated by higher authority. The specific tasks performed range from peacetime training missions, through cold and hot war operations, to a long range cruise missile strike into the heart of Mother Russia! Each mission offers players unique and challenging game play and some contain very nasty surprises that just might leave your jaw agape. Have you ever played a computer game that made you *sweat*? If you are a jaded player who thinks such a thing impossible, be forewarned, *688* will open your pores!

Starting Patrol

The game requires a minimum of 384K and a single disk drive. It is impossible to play from the original disks because EA has utilized a file decompression routine to get all of their data onto either two 5 and 1/4 inch floppies or one 3.5 inch disk. The manual provides clear instructions on how to produce working copies from the originals or install the game on a hard disk. In addition to the fairly standard hardware requirements, *688* supports several peripherals that enhance game play. Among these are: the **Ad Lib** sound board, the **Covox Speech Thing**, and **Hayes** compatible modems with a minimum of 1200 baud (or null modem cable). It also supports the full range of graphics from Hercules to VGA.

The game's interface is icon-driven, easy to master, and contains on-screen help functions. The icons themselves are the various control consoles within the submarine and they are manipulated by moving an arrow around the screen with either the keyboard or a mouse. Function keys also allow you to rapidly move between menus without having to return to the main screen each time.

The game's graphics range from above average in Hercules or CGA to spectacular in EGA and VGA. The area where the differences are most apparent is the bottom contour imaging option provided when commanding the *Los Angeles* class submarine. This high frequency, short range sonar allows players to see the ocean terrain in proximity to their submarine in a very realistic 3-D display. Aside from the obvious advantage of avoiding bottoming out (a very real danger) when operating near the ocean floor, this sonar also allows 688 skippers to utilize the topography to their advantage. Every shelf, ridge, pocket, and chasm is portrayed in vivid detail. This is very much a game of hide and seek.

Other fine graphics include: detailed representations of the surface and air platforms encountered, the ability to watch cruise missiles break the surface and lock onto their targets, and extremely satisfying explosions (unless they happen to occur on ships you are supposed to be protecting, of course). When you issue orders, a digitized picture of one of several crew members responds to your commands. What's more, the crew members even look like you would expect them to. Additionally, the Soviet *Alfa*'s controls are marked

in a pseudo-cyrillic script. Details are evident throughout and yield the impression that this game was a labor of love for the designer.

Target Rich Environment

Each mission varies significantly from the others, both with regard to the mission objectives and the classes of enemies encountered. Although players may only command the two aforementioned classes of submarines, they may encounter numerous other types, including diesel boats (noisy when snorkeling, very quiet when on batteries), ballistic missile submarines, cruise missile submarines (which can wreck havoc upon surface groups), and the infamous *Akula* class. The latter can do it all faster, deeper, and more quietly than the *Los Angeles* you command. Put *that* in your torpedo tube and jettison it.

Although it is possible to start playing the game without reading the entire manual (76 pgs.), the complexity of the situations you encounter will force you to read it soon enough. Once you have done so, however, and played one or two of the multi-threat scenarios, only minimal reference back to the manual is required.

At the completion of each mission you are rewarded with some well-deserved shore leave, if you survived and accomplished the objectives delineated in the pre-brief. If you escaped destruction but could not complete the mission, your Admiral will walk away with a substantial section of your butt in his teeth. Worse yet, if you happen to be lost at sea, a very chilling rendition of the Navy's death notification is shown laying on a desk.

Once you become proficient at the scenarios, it will be time to make the challenge even more realistic. **Electronic Arts** anticipated this need by allowing players the option of head-to-head modem combat. When utilizing this option, players may complete one of the standard scenarios or define their own mission objectives. Also, during the course of a game, or at the end, players may communicate with each other by transmitting messages from their respective radio rooms.

Earning Your Dolphins

The manual contains only sparse data on successful submarine tactics and you must tailor the basics to each unique situation you encounter. Without compromising some things which are best learned through experience, some good general guidance follows.

Always know how many thermal layers exist and at what depths.

Make frequent course, speed, and depth changes to complicate enemy targeting efforts.

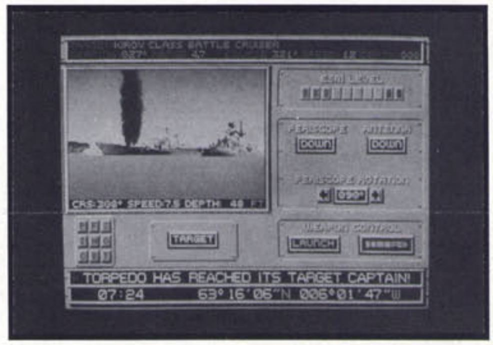
Utilize your towed array for gaining initial contact and establishing the intended movements of your targets. It should be retrieved prior to making an attack approach, as it will slow you considerably should you be fired upon with it streamed.

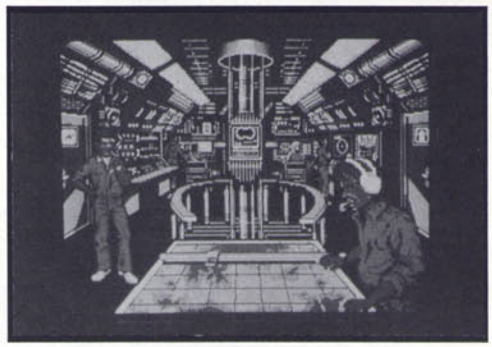
You will lose contacts while turning with the array streamed because of its instability. Don't worry, they will still be there when you steady on a new heading.

Remain aware of your baffles and periodically clear them by turning back suddenly along your previous course.

In peacetime situations, utilize noisemakers only as a last resort in evading your pursuers. The enemy is a nervous crew who may interpret the sound as a torpedo attack directed at them.

(Warning: The following section contains specific hints on game play. Readers who prefer a more general briefing should avoid this section.)





Mission briefings will only tell you what your intelligence knows. Every mission has little surprises that you won't discover until they happen to you. Here are a couple of examples. In "Torpex '89," there is a Soviet *Alfa* laying quietly on the bottom to observe the exercise. He may be chased off if you head directly at him and ping him hard a couple of times. In the "Goulash" scenario, you are guarding a group of merchants from two Soviet surface ships when, suddenly and without warning, a flight of Backfire bombers arrives and decimates your group. "Dirty Pool!" you scream, since your submarine obviously cannot attack aircraft. The key here is to engage the Soviet ships to the northeast before they discover your group and radio the location to the bomber group. Clever, but nasty when you experience it the first time. Such twists as these make the game intensely enjoyable and there are quite a few of them.

Down Doppler

688 is advertised as a simulation. In a market replete with very accurate aircraft simulators, the use of this term for *688* is misleading. The primary rationale behind this assessment involves the excessive amounts of damage you can sustain and still continue to function (i.e. six hits to sink as opposed to two for your enemies). Other considerations include the ease of targeting (although merchants and biological targets are added for confusion), the limitation of all torpedoes to a range of ten nautical miles, and the significant simplification of almost all aspects of submarine warfare. Having said that, it is important to note that the absence of these items does absolutely nothing to detract from exciting game play, they only detract from the ability to call *688* a simulator. In fact, the designers are aware of the trade offs made and their rationale was to go for greater speed and excitement in order to make a better *game*.

Conclusions

688 Attack Sub represents a quantum leap in quality for naval-oriented wargaming. Its' minor flaws are excusable in light of the game's tactical challenge, superb graphics, and sheer excitement. It is highly recommended and would be this reviewer's personal candidate for "Game of the Year."

CGW

(Continued from page 31)

the country (such as George Ball) is not reachable. Others are being watched by a Highfather agent who will kill your agent if he or she attempts an interview. Fortunately, there aren't too many of these (do not ever send anyone to see Lem Billings).

One thing you will have to put up with is a lot of repetitious typing, as well as occasional denseness by your agents. For instance, you send Iris to see someone and you want her to say she's from the future because you have information you think will convince the person. You have to type in *exactly* what you want Iris to say, which is usually several lines' worth.

Now, Iris calls back and says she couldn't see the person because he wasn't at home. You tell her to try again at a later time. She asks the future question, you say yes, and end up typing in the same information all over again. Neither she nor any other agent remembers this stuff. Considering how many times you will end up restoring the game or starting over from scratch, this can get to be a bit much.

This is also the case with some of the assignments you give your agents. Instead of just running right off, they may ask you who a person is (in which case you give their official title or relationship to some other person in the game) and why you think it's important the agent should see him or her. If you don't tell them what they want to hear, they won't go to see the person.

You may run into trouble occasionally with explaining why someone is important to visit. If an agent doesn't seem to understand what you're saying, try typing in what the manual has to say about the interviewee. That will pretty much always work (you don't have to enter everything, only what is relevant, usually a meeting with Kennedy on a certain day).

Watch out when using the notes in the back to prove your agents are from the future. Some of the information is public knowledge, or facts that could easily be obtained with a little research. These will not help your cause. You are best off picking out the most personal and private information, and using that.

Do not overlook Bridgette (Cooper's daughter). While very young (only 19), she can be just as effective as anyone else in some situations, sometimes more so. You have five people to utilize and no one is superfluous.

When to save the game can be a vexing question, since you have, unfortunately, only one save position. If you save at the wrong time (such as just after sending someone on an assignment that will lead to arrest or death), you're stuck, because there is no way that you can call your agents. Once they are out of the time sphere, you must wait for them to check in with you.

This is a major oversight, because there is no way to stop an agent once he or she receives an assignment. Combined with the single save position, it causes a lot of aggravation and re-starting. Multiple saves, or a way of contacting agents away from the time machine, should have been implemented in the game.

While there are many people you can visit, it is best to stick to the Washington environment generally. The only way you can win the game is by obtaining an interview with Kennedy and this can be done only by going through those who are close to him (after you've worked your way up to these people). Kennedy must receive three (count 'em, three) warnings from (different) people who are close to him before the interview comes about.

When you think you're about ready to see JFK, make certain you have your information prepared. Kennedy will be skeptical and you have only fifteen minutes real time to convince him of the truth. This is not the time to be flipping through the manual. Know what you want to say, and say it fast.

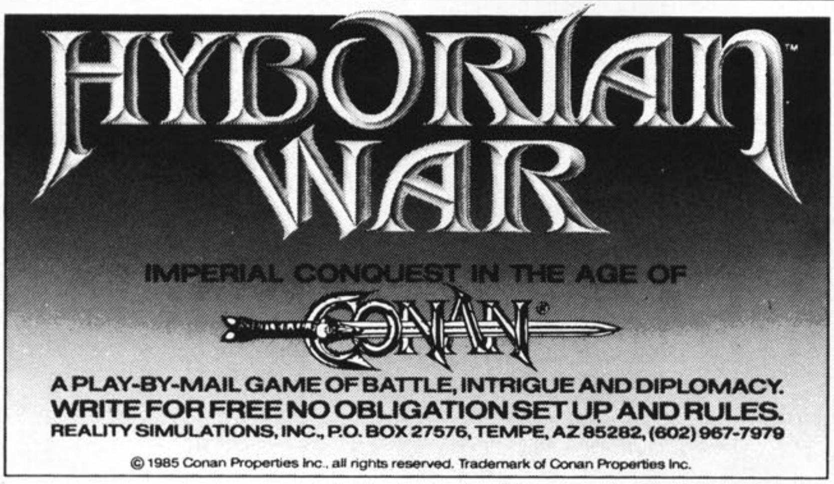
Well, I see by the old invisible clock on the wall it's just about that time again. Remember, if you have a question about an adventure game (please folks, adventures and role-playing only; I really can't give help with arcades or war games) you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: stop by the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: Visit the Games RoundTable (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source: send SMail to ST1030. By US Mail (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope to receive a reply!): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

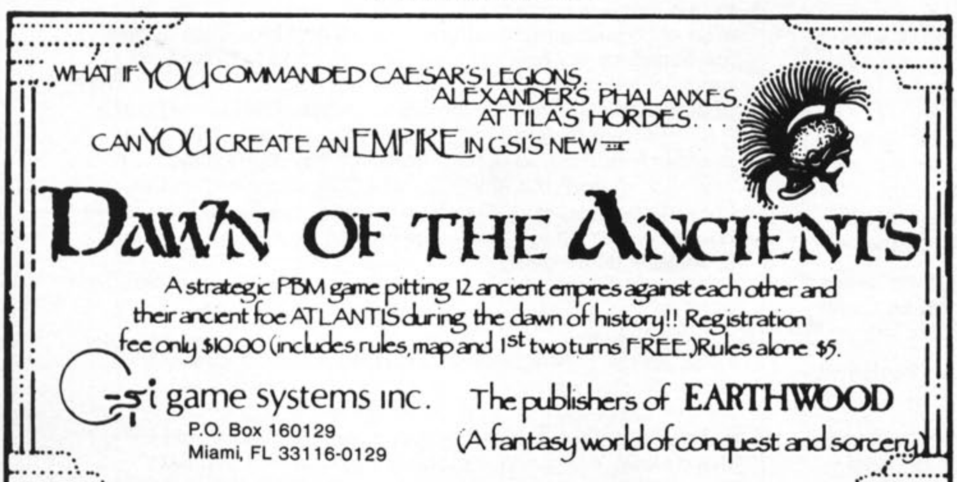
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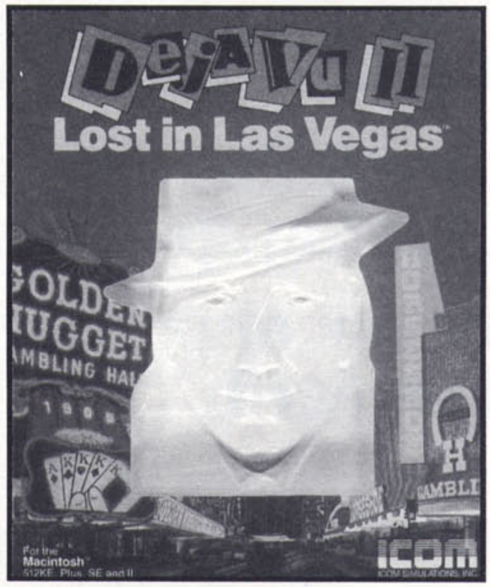
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Seems Like Old Times

Deja Vu II
Lost in Las Vegas

by Dave Arneson

TITLE:	Deja Vu II
SYSTEM:	Macintosh
# PLAYERS:	1
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	ICOM
PUBLISHER:	ICOM Wheeling, IL 60090



Good morning. Welcome to *Deja Vu II: Lost in Las Vegas*. You are waking up from a stupor that feels like a chronic hangover following a wild week in Vegas. There is a throbbing bump on the back of your head . . . .

Well, you get the picture. In fact, you get lots of them. All are nicely detailed and there are plenty of nice windows in which you can carry out various actions. Now, besides that throbbing in your head, you have one whole week of game time to turn $12.25 into $120,000.00. Piece of cake, right?

Well, maybe not.

Deja Vu II is a very linear game. Each location a player visits has a limited number of exits. It is possible to backtrack and switch between several locations, however, so lacking the proper information or item that some locations require is not a simple dead end. It is possible to recover by retracing one's steps.

The program can be copied onto your hard disk, but you will need to insert the original game disk before play can begin. The game runs on any Mac with enough memory, including the Macintosh II+ color system. Although *Deja Vu* had two disks and *Deja Vu II* only has one, both games seem to be the same size. Those who have seen the game box can be assured that the manual is just as cute as the packaging. In fact, the manual offers several useful hints concerning the command windows and how to use them more effectively. The hints could have been slightly more direct and helpful, however.

Deja Vu players will find few changes in *Deja Vu II* with regard to game mechanics. In fact, there are even a few old friends like Rudy and Gabby that can be quite helpful. In addition, many of the same old haunts will also figure in the early screens.

For those who didn't play *Deja Vu*, the click and drag system used in the games are quite unique. There are times, however, when there are just too many windows that need opening. After a couple of re-starts, though, players should get more efficient in knowing what to take and what is really needed.

Players can save the game at any point where no direct action is taking place. For instance, you cannot save when being confronted by the ever present human gorilla, Stogie. It is a good idea to make saves when getting off the beaten track. Getting off the track is often fatal.

The characters have a tremendous carrying capacity. Beds and sofas are out, but you can start your own greenhouse with all the plants you can collect. Later choices will have to be made about what is to be carried. After all, do you really need the two towels from the hotel? What the heck, have some fun!

Also, players should note that dawdling will result in simply running out of time. This is played out by having a nicotine fit with no cigarettes, being harassed by Stogie the human gorilla, getting assaulted by a bag lady, and other unpleasantries.

You can "talk" to people, but they rarely talk back. It is rare to get even one useful bit of information. Should you get said information, your sources will instantly clam up like everyone else.

"Search" everything everywhere. Do an "Operate" and "Open," as well. There is no telling what you will find: day old pizza to "Consume," dull pencils, hidden keys, . . . whatever.

The sequence of commands is very important. Incorrect sequences will gain you no results. Even turning on a flashlight can be complicated in the extreme. To whit, "Flashlight-Operate-Flashlight." So, what's wrong with "Operate Flashlight?" Oh, because you can use it as an ineffective weapon instead. Oh, I see . . . scratch an hour and a half of this reviewer's time . . . Grumble!

For those of you who haven't passed the *Deja Vu II* school of pencil sharpening, here is "How Not to Sharpen a Pencil." "Penknife-Open-Penknife-Operate-Pencil." You are then told what a klutz you are and the pencil is now shorter, but not sharp. "Operate-Penknife (Open or Closed)" doesn't work either. Another hour and half shot.

I simply must refuse to reveal how long it took me to work out other *simple* commands. Let's just say that I would

(Continued on page 50)

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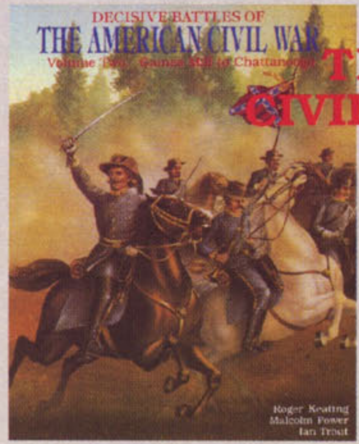
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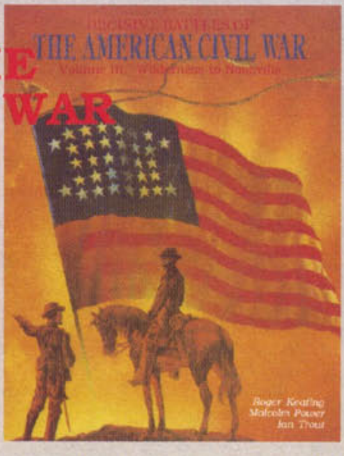
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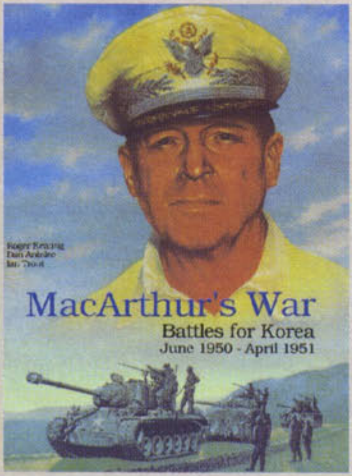
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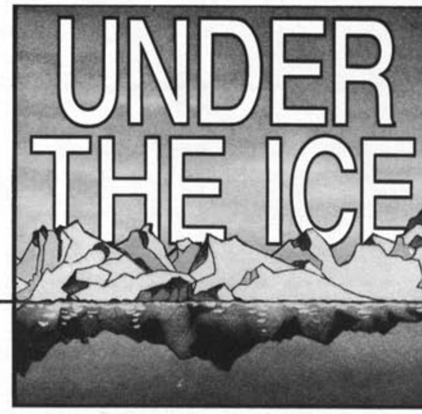
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by M. Evan Brooks



NAME:	UNDER THE ICE
SYSTEMS:	Atari ST, IBM
REVIEWED:	IBM
PRICE:	$39.95
PUBLISHER:	Lyric Software 6 Beach Plum Drive Northport, NY 11768

INTRODUCTION

Under The Ice is a simulation of submarine warfare in the GIUK (Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom) gap during World War III. The player may choose either NATO or Soviet forces in three scenarios (Ambush, in which a Red Battle Group attacks a NATO SSN [attack submarine] group; Wolfpack, in which a NATO SSN task force has penetrated the Soviet Bastion; Missile Boats, in which NATO must stop the SSBNs [Strategic Missile Submarines] from reaching safety in the polar ice pack). The player commands his submarines individually, plots moves and executes actions in both real and compressed time. The name of the game is Stealth, Search, Seek and Neutralize.

DOCUMENTATION

The documentation serves as an introduction to *Under The Ice*, but it does not delineate the game play or tactics satisfactorily. A "README" documentation file is included on the disk and is mandatory reading because of modifications to the game system. Do not attempt play without thoroughly perusing the documentation file. Game play is mouse-driven and, although a mouse is noted as "optional," utilization of keyboard inputs is less than satisfactory. This reviewer recommends that a mouse be considered as a requirement for play, as keyboard input is slow and tedious. The manual does succinctly explain the individual scenarios, however pay attention to the victory conditions described, especially in playing Missile Boats. For example, NATO destruction of SSNs is worthless in the strategic gestalt, and with the action rising to a crescendo of destruction, the player can often forget his initial goal and be sidetracked into "cheap" enemy kills, thereby allowing a Soviet decisive victory when their SSBNs achieve a position of safety where they can launch their missiles against the American Heartland.

The documentation is only sixteen pages long, and attempts to explain both game play and the principles of sonar. The notes on sonar principles are interesting, but of insufficient depth to allow a proper comprehension of what is/should be happening. Consider the fact that convergence zones play a major role in submarine warfare, but the documentation never explains their role. In effect, convergence zones are a "skip" effect of sound waves through the ocean. Similar to a pebble thrown into a pond, these zones are widening circles approximately every 23-32 miles apart (depending on surface and sub-surface conditions). At the zone, one may "see" the signature of another vessel. However, such signatures disappear as the vessel traverses the zone. In terms of tactics, if the signature of a contact should abruptly disappear, such vessel is on a contact course and the proper procedure would be to reverse course until the contact is reachieved. On the other hand, if the signal gradually fades, this means that the vessel is heading away, and one can react accordingly.

The documentation is a starting point, but many of the game play mechanics are left to the user to discover. The implementation of sonar techniques appears relatively accurate, but attempting to decipher them isn't an enjoyable experience.

GRAPHICS

The graphics are adequate. However, since they rely heavily on windows, pull-down menus and mouse input, it is apparent that *Under The Ice* was ported from an ST program. The sea location is well-portrayed and zoom features allow in-depth magnification of a factor of sixteen. In addition, convergence zones, grid lines and distance circles (a known-distance measurement) may be toggled on and off.



The submarines themselves are represented by an icon, which may be accessed via keyboard/mouse. Also, when a vessel is "spotted," the program allows one to mark up to sixteen separate locations. This is very useful for determining bearings and contact approaches. However, judicious use should be made of these; too much clutter merely confuses the issue.

GAME PLAY

Under The Ice is not a "shake out the box and begin play" type of simulation. Accessing information and proper utilization of tactics requires both time and experience. Moves are "plotted" on screen, with time of travel and ETA (estimated time of arrival) noted. Often, one will suffer from information overload and a careful analysis of contacts and bearings will be required in order to achieve success. In addition, wolfpack tactics must be utilized. Historically, the United States Navy has never optimized submarine wolfpack operations and submarine commanders work as "lone wolves." However, Soviet methodology reflects lessons learned from the German wolfpacks of World War II and the simulation allows NATO to operate in a similar fashion. Such operations are a "guesstimate" of future capabilities and may or may not reflect actuality. However, use of multi-boats allows one to accurately fix and engage an enemy vessel. While a single submarine might only be able to get a bearing on a contact, a pack of three could achieve both range and bearing in the same amount of time by triangulating the data received.

(Continued on page 42)

SCAVENGERS OF THE MUTANT WORLD

by Scorpia

Scavengers of the Mutant World is the latest in the wave of post-nuclear-destruction games to come on the market. It is set in a shattered world where cities lie in ruins, monsters roam the outdoors, radiation zones are everywhere, and the few bands of humans left do what they can to survive. Overall, it's a pretty grim picture.



TITLE:	Scavengers of the Mutant World
SYSTEM:	IBM
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Bruce Beaumont, Richard Launius, and Chris Stassen
PUBLISHER:	Interstel Webster, TX

One such tribe of humans lives in the ruins of Lau. Each year, they select the best of their young people and send them to forage among the other ruins for anything: food, weapons, armor, tools, parts, etc. This scavenging gives the game its title and is also the major activity of play.

You begin by running a world-creation routine to set up the various ruins, objects, characters, and so forth. Thus, each game is, in one sense, unique: towns and the objects they contain will not be the same from world to world, although most items can be found somewhere. Otherwise, there isn't much difference from one game to another.

Once the world has been created, you choose a team of four from a pool of twenty characters. The character symbols themselves are fixed, but the names and attributes of the characters do differ from world to world. Note that you do *not* get to "roll up" any characters. You're stuck with what comes with the world.

Attributes are pretty much standard with one addition, rad points. These rad points determine how much radiation a character can absorb before dying of radiation poisoning. There's a lot of radiation out there, in different forms, and a high rad point attribute is important.

The initial team members come with a supply of food and nothing else. It is, therefore, necessary to walk around and explore the interior of Lau to find weapons and armor before going outdoors. Scattered around the interior are a number of humans. These are the sixteen characters who weren't chosen for the team. Their only importance in sitting around is to wait until you invite them into the team to replace a dead or dropped member. Otherwise, you can ignore them.

Expect to have *some* hostile encounters inside Lau. Remember, it *is* a ruin, *not* a safe haven. Hostile creatures roam the interior and you will have to fight them. You are usually safe when you are (CA)mping, however.

Once you've found everything there is to find in Lau, it's time to begin exploring the outdoors. Everything you meet there is hostile. Aside from other Lauans, everyone and everything is out to kill you. So, the rule to follow is: "If it moves, kill it. If it doesn't move, kill it anyway."

There are two special dangers in the outdoors: rad zones (also found in some ruins) and rad storms. Rad zones show up as areas of red dots; the closer the dots, the more intense the radiation. Since walking over one of these zones reduces rad points, they are best avoided.

Rad storms come along every so often. Usually one of your party members will sense the approaching storm and give warning. Then, the only thing you can do is run for the nearest ruin and wait for the storm to pass. Being hit by a rad storm is the same as walking over a rad zone, except that storms vary in intensity and you never know how bad the storm is until it hits.

The game has an auto-mapping feature for the outdoors only. At any time, you can call up the world map to see where you are and where you've been. It can point out unexplored areas, and is also helpful for locating ruins when you need to duck in somewhere to avoid a storm.

Exploring ruins is simply a matter of going inside, walking all around, and picking up whatever you can find and carry. There are weight limits defined by strength, so you can't pick up every single thing. However, you can drop items or trade them among party members if you need to get weight down.

Much of the time, you will be fighting the creatures that inhabit the ruins. Weapons vary from chains and swords to bows and shotguns (the most potent weapon). Armor, oddly enough, is strictly from fantasy games: leather, chain, plate, etc., except for the addition of rad suits. All of these items must be found. They cannot be purchased.

You can usually see an opponent coming toward you, although that is not particularly helpful. Almost all types of opponents are faster than you are and they tend to catch up to you sooner or later (the only exceptions are that monsters encountered inside don't follow you out and the ones encountered outside don't follow you in).

When combat begins, the scene is a "zoom in" of the actual area you occupy. The party is automatically set up in a diamond shape and there is no way to change the formation before fighting begins. In a narrow corridor (only three spaces wide), this can be disastrous if a weak party member happens to be close to the monsters. Monsters, by the way, can come from any direction: front, rear, or side. Those that can fly (there are plenty of them) seem to come from the walls, but that is simply an optical illusion.

Who goes when is determined by the speed attribute. Most of the time, this means the monsters get to go first. On a character's turn, he or she can move, change direction, equip a new weapon (if one is available in the character's inventory), or take a swipe at a monster. For non-

projectile weapons, this means being up next to an opponent. For missile weapons (bows, spears, slings and the like), distance is not a factor, but having a clear path to the target is. If a teammate is in the way, the shot will hit him, not the creature.

It is possible to retreat from combat, as individuals, by moving them off the combat screen. When the last (living) member is off, the screen changes to the normal one and the party as a whole is moved in a random direction away from the scene of combat. This, however, is only a temporary respite, since the monsters will continue to chase the group until: (a) the monsters have all been killed; (b) the whole party has been killed; or (c) the party leaves or enters a ruin.

This means that you have to fight everything you come across in order to thoroughly explore any ruin. Smearing monsters provides experience, but you only know when you've "gone up a level" by the increase in a character's rad points and hit points. Physical attributes do not change except by using one of the "teaching machines" that can be found in the ruins. Using such a device will raise one of the character's stats at random. The machines have some dangers: on occasion they will explode, wounding whoever tried to use it. At other times, the device is simply "used up" and no longer functions. The number of uses for any given machine is also random.

In general, playing Scavengers is like playing pick-up-sticks in a killer dungeon. There are no puzzles to solve, no one to talk to, no real obstacles to overcome; you simply march around ruins grabbing what you can, when you can, while fighting a never-ending stream of monsters, indoors and out. Eventually, the monsters become so powerful that you don't really have a fair chance of surviving.

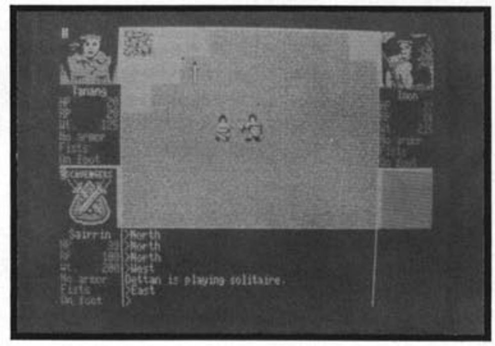
Opponents are geared roughly to the level of the group; as the characters become more powerful (relatively speaking), so do the monsters. Unfortunately, there comes a time, at around 300+ hitpoints, where the creatures are just too devastating to survive combat with them. This is particularly the case with monsters that emit radiation, and there are many, far too many, of these.

This radiation causes immediate mutations in characters. Some mutations, such as telekinesis, are beneficial, but the majority are harmful. This is especially the case with the radiation reaction mutation, which reduces a character's rad points to 1. As you might expect, any further radiation this character absorbs will kill him. Rad suits, I found, do not protect against this type of radiation.

Imagine your party running into something like three giant condors which are very, very fast and emit radiation. Each condor will get about 3-4 moves before your party can do anything, even in a non-surprise situation. At least one member of the group will probably be dead before you even have a chance to fight back. Unfortunately, there are not only a plethora of condors, but there are quite a few other monsters that are just as fast and just as deadly.

Adding to the frustration is the fact that there is no way to avoid these creatures, since the game is sending them out based on the level of the group. The only thing you can do is get your team back to Lau and have them drop everything they are carrying. Then, drop the characters from the team (one at a time) and replace them with the first-level characters that are sitting around. It is difficult to think of a more inane procedure than this for getting through a game.

Even worse, *Scavengers* features the same sort of "non-save" made infamous in *Alternate Reality*: the death of any character is immediately written to disk and you have only one save position. If you want to keep your characters going and have real saves, there is only one thing you can do about it. Save the game, exit to DOS, and copy the save file to a backup. Then, if something unpleasant happens, you can copy the backup over to the game data file and try again.



Of course, this means re-booting the game after each such save. It also means having to go through the "enter word X from line Y on page Z" routine. You may have trouble with this if you do not have the printed insert of the revised page 10.

There is an endgame. The pick-up-sticks aspect is not entirely without purpose. Somewhere in the ruins are plans for one of two items. Locating the plans and parts needed to construct it and then, constructing the device is the real goal of the game. This is actually a nice idea, and makes for a non-violent ending (at least, you don't have to kill Foozle the evil Mutant King).

Interstel may have attempted the impossible in trying to create a CRPG with replayability. Unfortunately, the rather limited goal of the game and the lack of a definite plotline works against it. In effect, players end up with a diversion rather than an absorbing adventure. The good idea ends up being torpedoed by everything that comes before. If one is really looking for a CRPG, the frustration and aggravation just isn't worth it.

Bottom line: Not recommended.

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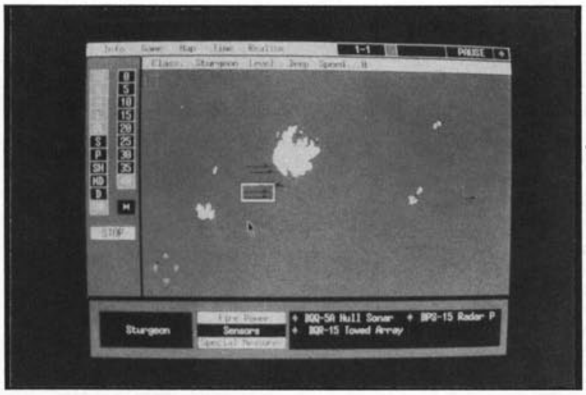
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(Continued from page 39)

Under The Ice



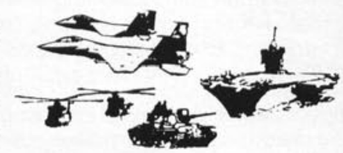
Pay particular attention to ocean conditions. Use of ocean layers, weather conditions and convergence zones have an important bearing on detection of submarines and the intelligent commander will place emphasis on proper utilization of these factors. The torpedo is the weapon of choice and utilization of proper search techniques will place one in a proper firing position (hopefully, before the enemy reaches a similar state). Playing the Soviet side allows one a different perspective. Generally outnumbering the NATO opponent, one can attrition his way to victory. Again, however, use of coordinated wolfpack information and sonar techniques is the key to victory.

CONCLUSIONS

Under The Ice simulates operational submarine warfare. Not as tactically oriented as **Microprose**'s *Red Storm Rising* (soon to be released for the IBM), it puts the user in the position of the commander and executive officer, plotting the vessel dispositions on the mapboard. However, the paucity of documentation and the resulting slow learning curve results in a product with appeal to the true submarine buff and not to the general gaming public. **CGW**



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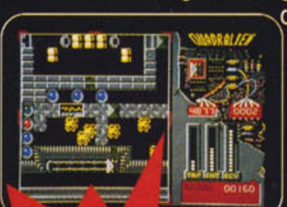
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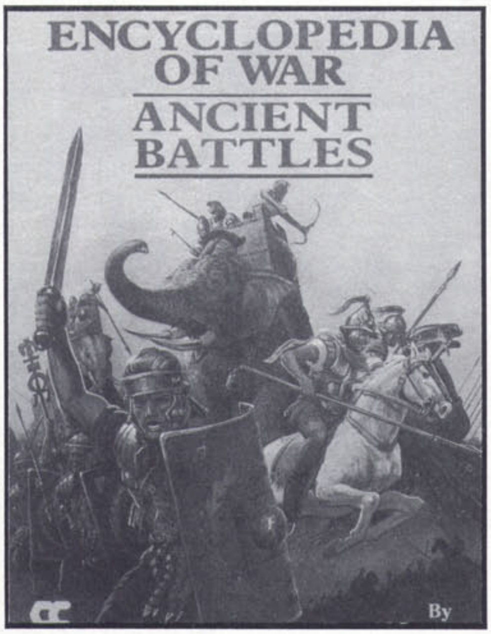
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Hoplites On Parade

"Ancient Battles"

by Lt. H. E. Dille

You feel the flanks of your mount shudder under the barded armor as the cold north wind sweeps along the ridge where your Huns have gathered. The Roman legions are formed in squat, menacing squares to your front in the valley below. The stalemate has continued for two hours since daybreak, despite feints designed to force the Roman leader, Aetius, to commit to a course of action. You now realize that he is far too wise to assault uphill as you had originally hoped. Continued inactivity will only result in the demoralization of your troops, so your decision is clear. Lifting your standard above your head, a sudden hush falls upon the ridge line, pierced only by the short, crisp snorts of the horses. As your arm sweeps downward, the earth explodes under the thunder of a thousand hoof falls. You are filled with sadness and joy as your brothers go forth to death and glory.



TITLE:	Ancient Battles
SYSTEM:	IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNER	R.T. Smith
PUBLISHER:	Case Computer Simulations c/o Scorpion Lake Hopatcong, NJ

As the first product in **Case Computer Simulations'** *Encyclopedia of War* series, *Ancient Battles* (*AB*) was a risky gambit for the British firm because of its subject matter. After all, it is a pretty safe assumption that you could hold a world-wide convention of ancient history buffs at a Holiday Inn in Skokie, Illinois and still have room for a Shriners' banquet. Fortunately for **CCS** and wargamers alike, you do not have to be an ancient history buff to enjoy this game.

All of the major armies and weapon types of antiquity, from Alexander's Macedonian Hypaspists to Julius Caesar's Legions, are represented in the game. The broad range of infantry and cavalry types available provides a diversity in game play that remains one of the major strengths of *AB*. Additionally, each of these unit types employed different strategies for success against each of their opponents. Consequently, since the game is a tactical level simulation, it is possible for you to experiment with a multitude of approaches rather than methodically recreating the actual events of a particular battle.

A Cohort Is More Than A Partner In Crime

Before addressing the finer points of the game, it should be noted that *AB* is not simply fun, it has educational value as well! (Groan! Shudder! You game purists are all alike!) Nevertheless, *AB* does not set out with the purpose of educating players on the finer points of ancient tactics, it simply allows the players to absorb these points through experience. It is impossible to play the game without gaining an appreciation of the problems faced by the great generals of antiquity, as well as the tactical changes that occurred as a result of new formations and weaponry. Barbarian skirmishers, Phalanxes, Legions, and Cohorts (a later reorganization of the original Roman Legions that consisted primarily of Heavy Infantry) are depicted in conjunction with chariots, archers, elephants, and conventional cavalry to round out the diversity inherent in warfare throughout the ancient world.

Alexander's Hydaspian Band (Scenarios and Mechanics)

AB comes with five pre-generated scenarios. The first of these is the Battle of the River Hydaspes. This is the site where Alexander the Great soundly defeated the Indian army in 326 B.C. by utilizing combined arms tactics. The second scenario is the Battle of Zama (202 B.C.), where Hannibal's Carthaginian army was enveloped from the rear by the Roman forces under the command of Scipio. A similar plight befell Philip of Macedonia in the Battle of Cynocephalae (197 B.C.), the third scenario. The Battle of Pharsalus (44 B.C.) is portrayed as illustrative of the importance of maintaining a strategic reserve (the source of Caesar's victory over Pompey in spite of being grossly outnumbered). Finally, one of the largest battles of antiquity was the Battle of Chalons in A.D. 451. Although the historical battle was inconclusive, this scenario provides the best presentation of infantry vs. cavalry tactics among the group and should test the mettle of even the best armchair generals.

Within each of these scenarios, the player has the option of altering the length of the battle, the level of visibility, and whether the forces will use normal or free deployment. The number of players may also be altered once a game is in progress, a very handy feature that this reviewer would like to see included in all strategy wargames. Replayability is also enhanced by the presence of a powerful map editor and scenario builder.

Once you have the game up and running, you will find it to be guided by a very user friendly menu system. After you have either selected a scenario or designed one of your own, you must determine whether each side will be controlled by Human, Computer, or Shared command. The option for shared command allows a player to control only those forces directly assigned to the commanding general of a given side while the computer controls all of the subordinate generals in accordance with the deployment plan decided by the human. Use of this option precludes total control of all one's forces, but provides a more realistic command simulation.

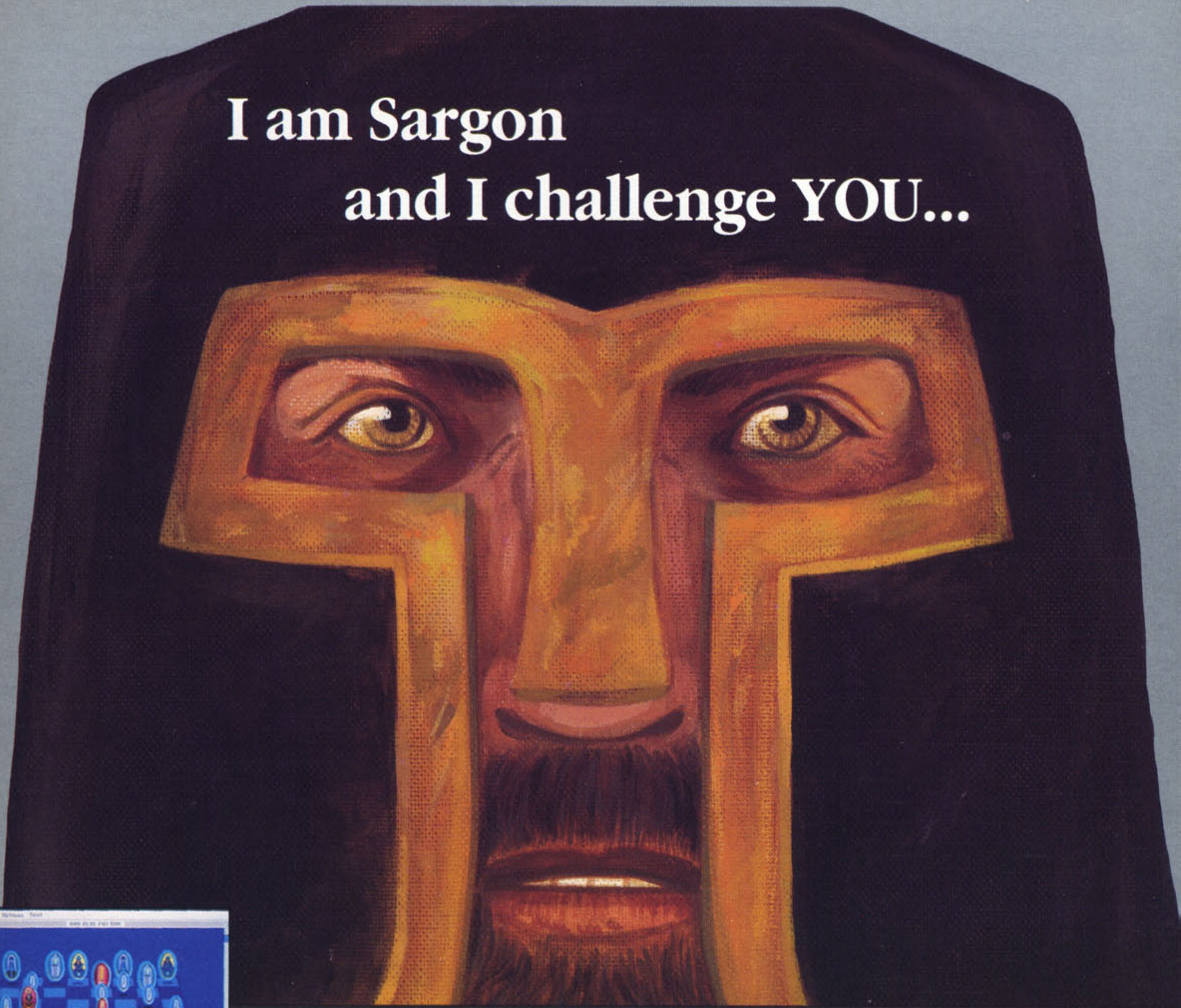
The sequence of play for each turn of a battle is completed in the following manner:

- Computer checks which units are visible to each side.

(Continued on page 46)

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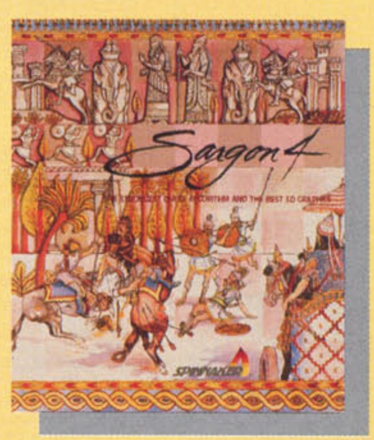
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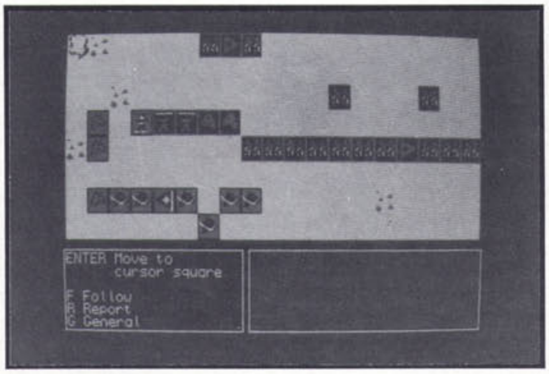
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(Continued from page 44)

- Players give orders to units.
- Computer carries out the orders of both sides.
- Computer adjudicates missile fire.
- Computer calculates effects of hand-to-hand combat.
- Computer checks morale of all units.
- Players are shown which units rout or must retreat.
- Units are given another chance to complete their orders.



A Point system based upon the number and strength of units remaining on the battlefield is utilized to determine the victor and status reports of a battle's progress may either be called up on the screen or dumped to a printer at the player's discretion.

Tactics, Too! (Tips on Playing Well)

Always use the "Follow" command to preserve the integrity of your infantry lines. This should be ordered, even though it may be difficult over rough, uneven terrain. Further, strive to outflank the lines of your enemy while precluding him from doing the same. Also, do not squander your cavalry on fruitless frontal assaults on massed infantry, these units are much more effective at harassment and flanking maneuvers.

In addition, remember that your generals are valuable assets that are best employed by using their mobility to intercede at key points of the battle, this can make the difference between victory and defeat. Finally, if you really want to excel, go to your public library and check out a good book on ancient tactics. The hammer and anvil maneuver utilized by Philip of Macedon, for instance, really works.

Parade Rest (Conclusions)

Ancient Battles is an enjoyable game that will continue to challenge players long after other games have started to gather dust on the shelf. The subject matter is a refreshing change of pace for experienced wargamers, but remains basic enough for budding enthusiasts to master. Hopefully, CCS will continue this series with a treatment of ancient naval warfare or a solid look at the medieval world. One thing is certain, however, *AB* is capable of keeping players busy until a sequel is released. **CGW**

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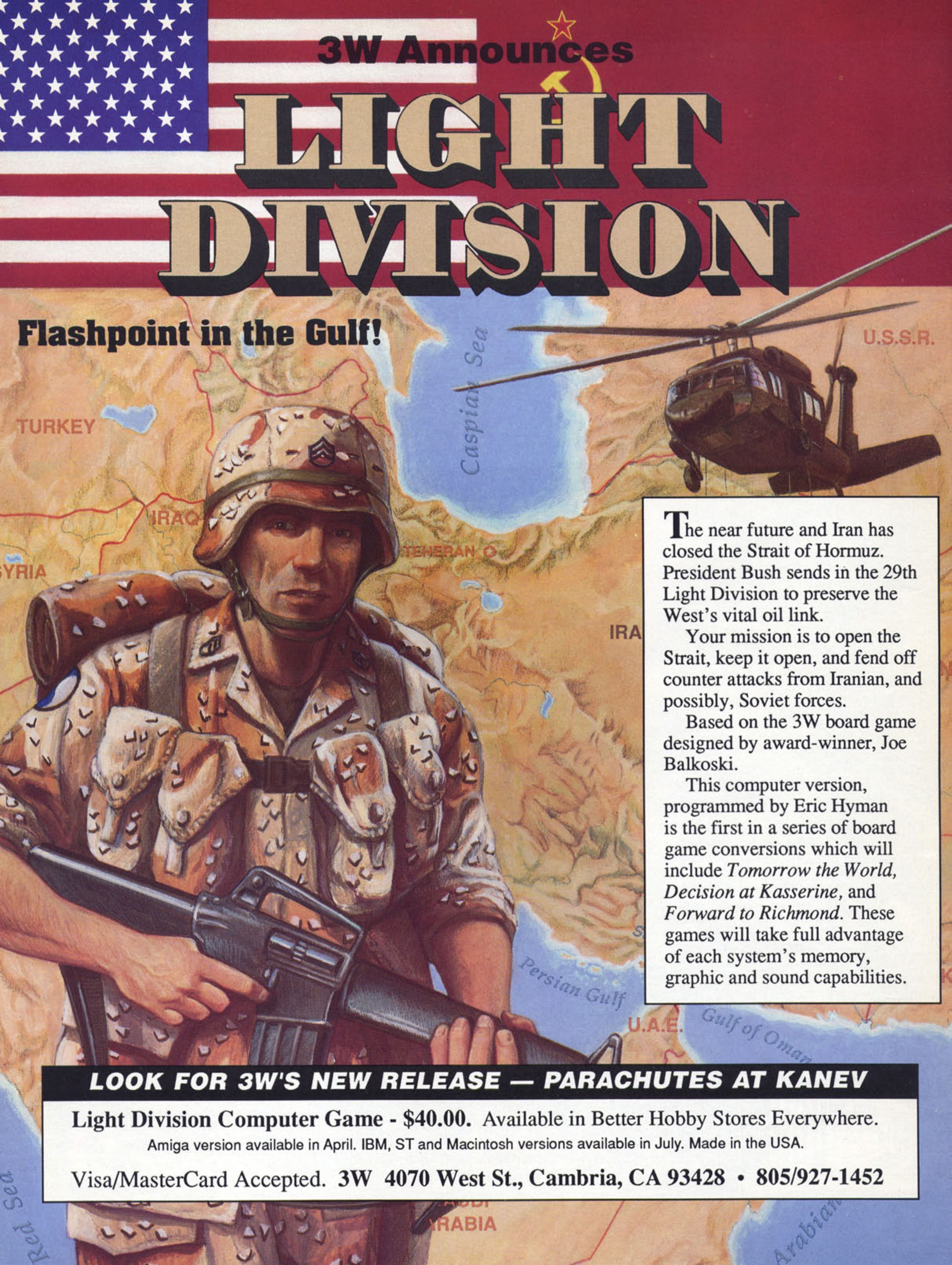
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150 S. Pine Island Rd.
Plantation, Florida 33324

CANDY LAND: Milton Bradley's board game comes to the computer. Players play against each other, or the computer, and try to move their Gingerbread playing piece to the Candy Castle at the end of the path to win. For ages 3 to 6. IBM (pictured), Apple II, IIGS and C-64 ($14.95). Circle Reader Service #12.

CHUTES AND LADDERS: Another Milton Bradley classic for the computer. A good learning aid to the teaching of numbers and counting, the game is designed for ages 4 to 7. IBM (pictured), Apple II, IIGS and C-64 ($14.95). Circle Reader Service #13.

Konami
815 Mittel Drive
Wood Dale, IL 60191

BOOT CAMP: "All right, listen up, you mama's monitors and diaper disks! This is your digitized D.I. speaking, and I'm going to take one or two of you raw-boned recruits through basic marine training. If you can manage to move your lazy joysticks through the assault course, three levels of the firing range, iron man race, chin-ups, and hand to hand combat training, we might let you lily-livered reflexes face a band of real terrorists. C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #14.

Logotron Ltd.
Dales Brewery,
Gwydir Street,
Cambridge, England CB1 2LJ

PROSPECTOR IN THE MAZES OF XOR: The player must traverse 30 mazes and collect all the blue balloons lying around to successfully win this action game in the tradition of Boulderdash. A construction set is also provided to make the game eminently replayable. Great graphics, backdrops, and smooth scrolling make the game addictive. Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #15.

Microdeal
576 S. Telegraph
Pontiac, MI 48053

TANGLEWOOD: This graphic adventure requires the player to control five mining mobiles, and search the surface of the planet Tanglewood to find a variety of treasures, crystals and clues to recover your uncle's missing deed. Completely mouse driven, the game runs in real time and features attractive graphics. Amiga (pictured), and Atari ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #16.

Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

COMBAT COURSE: Basic training redux in this joystick driven action game. The player must overcome five levels of difficulty and control grenades, dynamite and dogs, while traversing a variety of trenches. The Amiga and ST versions come with the digitized sound of a DI barking orders and insults. Amiga (pictured) and ST ($39.95), C-64 ($29.95) and IBM ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #17.

HOSTAGE: The player controls a six-person strike team, assigned to rescue embassy hostages from a terrorist band. You can access different points of view, shoot out windows, repel down walls, smash through windows, observe from helicopters, or snipe at the terrorists, just don't accidentally kill the hostages! Three difficulty levels, as well as a training mission, are provided. Joystick required. Amiga (pictured) and ST ($44.95), IBM ($39.95), and C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #18.

INTERNATIONAL TEAM SPORTS: Players compete against 31 different countries in five team sports; volleyball, water polo, soccer, swimming and track. One or two players can play or coach in this joystick driven action game. As

(Continued on page 52)

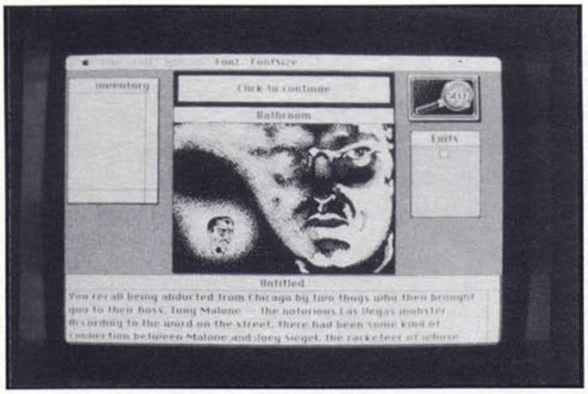
(Continued from page 36)

Deja Vu II

rather have been playing the game instead. When the major puzzles to solve involve the interface, it gets old quick. If only the manual would have offered a little more assistance.

Deja View (Conclusion)

Linear text games with "Guess The Commands" are right down on the bottom of my list of boring ways to waste time. Lengthy experimentation to figure out how to take a taxi somewhere has never been a useful, fun, part of any game.



Players who don't mind the mental gymnastics necessary to accomplish this might really like *Deja Vu II*.

All Roads Lead To Chicago (Warning: Hints Follow!)

The first order of business is to acquire funds. Fortunately, you *are* in a casino. Unfortunately, the games here are tough and it happens to be the *only* casino in this version of Vegas. Here, the lucky quarter sometimes works. If that fails, though, you can always look for an old friend. As it says in the manual, *don't* get greedy. It also helps to have a fast hand on the mouse in order to shovel chips quickly into your pockets.

The next order of business is to get home. In fact, this is really the only thing you can do. Avoid wandering in the desert. Vegas may be small, but the desert is big. You'll find there isn't much in the train station except trains. Check departure times and run (don't walk) to the train. Don't cross the tracks or you'll get crunched.

Chicago starts off pretty well. You will meet Gabby and then, it's off to the Bar, the Morgue, or your own apartment. There are really no other choices.

Your old bar is not what it used to be. In fact, it's closed. There are a number of ways in and interesting things to find. Maybe there really is a Mercedes somewhere, but I prefer Gabby's taxi and traveling office. At this point, frustration begins to set in. The bar presents a real opportunity. It is going to take a lot to get past this point. I really got hung up here. Maybe the board is the "key?" Hmm . . . **CGW**



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(Continued from page 18)

First Over Germany

reviewer made it back to base with severely crippled aircraft on more than one occasion.

One very nice touch to the game is the sequence after the pilot is wounded. If the pilot should be wounded, the B-17 will respond sluggishly and the co-pilot must help fly the plane. If the co-pilot is low in aptitude and experience, controlling the plane will be difficult. Wise players will pay close attention to the aptitude and experience level of the co-pilot during initial crew selection.

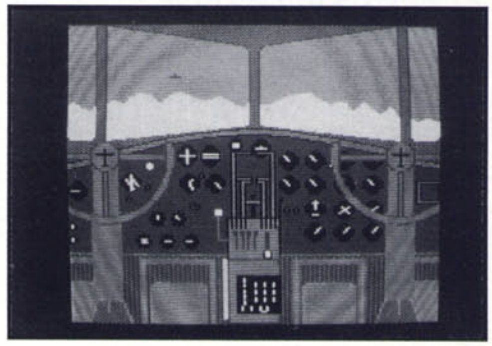
Review Board (Critical Observations)

There are some disappointing facets to the game. For example, when planes are over a target and heavy flak is bursting around them, the joystick response is extremely sluggish. This is true even if the pilot is completely healthy and has not been wounded. One must also wonder why a map of potential target areas (such as the one on the back of the *50 Mission Crush* manual) was not included. It could certainly have been helpful.

Finally, when players are selecting gunners to shoot at the enemy fighters, there is a major problem. Should the player select a gunner that is wounded or out of ammunition, it is not possible to select another gunner to fire. That enables the enemy to get a free shot at the player's B-17, even though another gunner might have had an equal chance to down the bogey. This seems unrealistic, since any gunner with any kind of shot at the enemy would be bound to have his gun blazing in such a situation.

Recommendation

Overall, *First Over Germany* is an interesting product. It has adequate graphics and sound, but does not press the limits of any computer's capabilities. It offers the kinds of excitement gamers have come to expect from a simulation, but not the kind of technical flash and visual stimuli one associates with the first person viewpoint. The real value of the program is in taking on the role of a WWII bomber pilot and experiencing his career in a compressed time frame. Perhaps, the empathy engendered toward this leader of men and his responsibility for the welfare of his crew is the most salient facet of the experience. Any player that wants to know the human factor of the air war will be interested in this game and those who enjoyed *50 Mission Crush* and *B-24* will definitely want to play this game.



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Curriculum Product News, Davidson & Associates, Inc., DLM Teaching Resources, Early Childhood News, Education Systems Corporation, Soft-Kat/Baker & Taylor, Teaching and Computers, T.H.E. Journal, Today's Catholic Teacher

Circle Reader Service #50

(Continued from page 49)

coach, you must pick the players to compete on your team, and watch them age with each Festival. New players become available with time, and can inject youth into an aging team. C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #19.

Psygnosis
c/o Computer Software Service
2150 Executive Drive
Addison, IL 60101

BAAL: Baal, the supreme God of Evil (So, who you gonna' call?) has dispatched his army to steal a War Machine. The player takes the part of the leader of the Time Warriors and attempts to stop this evil plot. Players fight past 100 monsters and 400 traps to successfully retrieve the War Machine. The game has typical, high quality Psygnosis graphics, sound and scrolling. Amiga (pictured) and Atari ST ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #20.

Publishing International
333 W. El Camino Real, Suite 222
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

HOMETOWN, U.S.A.: This is a construction set for building model houses. They can be used as models, sets for trains, decorations, doll houses, etc. The package comes with 15 different building styles. The designs can be loaded into a paint program, and then completed with windows, doors and signs that come on the disk. IBM (pictured), Mac, Apple II, IIGS and C-64 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service # 21.

Scandinavian Systems
51 Monroe Street, Suite 1101
Rockville, MD 20850

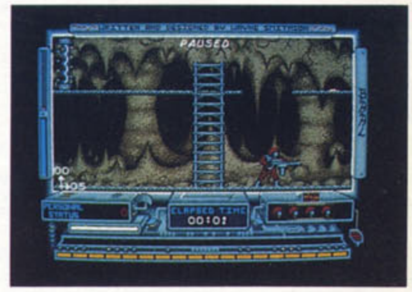
CHESS: Unlike most chess programs, this one plays more of a "jailhouse" or "coffeehouse" style of attack game. Rated with an International Chess Federation score of 1800, the program can be handicapped and offers the usual features of chess programs. But it doesn't play along classic lines. Be ready for a variety of novel attacks on your king! IBM ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #22.

Software Toolworks
19808 Nordhoff Place
Chatsworth, CA 91311

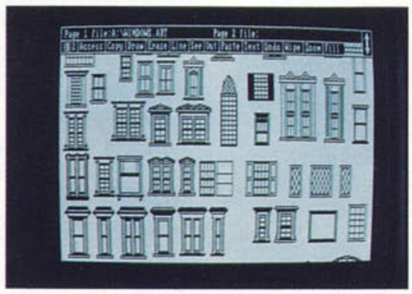
THE FIDELITY CHESSMASTER 2100: An advancement in the Fidelity



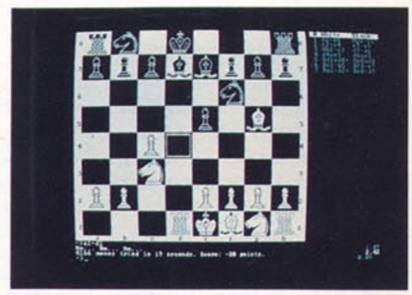
International Team Sports



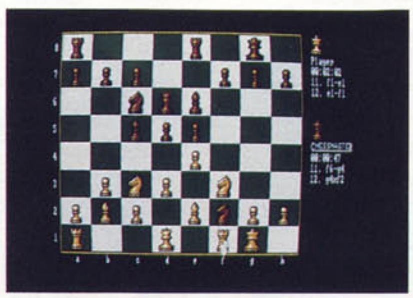
Baal



Hometown, U.S.A.



Chess



Chessmaster 2100



Hidden Agenda

series, this program offers 2-D and 3-D graphics, over 150,000 opening moves, unlimited levels of play, classic games and in-depth analysis. Rated at 2325, this is a big package! IBM (pictured), Apple II series, IIGS and IIC+ ($49.95), and C-64 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #23.

Springboard Software
7808 Creekridge Circle
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55435

HIDDEN AGENDA: The player assumes the role of a Central American revolutionary leader who has just come to power. You must appoint a cabinet, bargain, negotiate, compromise, deal with diplomats and journalists, show badges (Badges? We don't haff to show no stinking badges!) all the while improving the economy, and guiding your country to prosperity, or ruin. An incredibly detailed simulation, this looks like a real winner. IBM ($59.95). Circle Reader service #24.

Conversions Received

For the Apple
Pool of Radiance (SSI)

For the Apple IIGS
Jigsaw (Britannica Software)

For the Atari ST
Tetris (Spectrum Holobyte

For the C-64
Guerilla War (Data East)
Battles of Napoleon (SSI)

For the IBM
Barbarian (Melbourne House)
Jigsaw (Britannica Software)
Road Runner (Mindscape)

Circle Reader Service #51 »

The Atlanta Journal
THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

Entertaining and Educational Games Now Cover a Wide Variety of Interests

THE PERSONAL COMPUTER
By Jack Warner

I gather that there are still computer users out there who don't use their machines for entertainment, and for them there is no hope. For the rest of us, games are the ideal Christmas gift.

To that end, I've compiled a short list of the very best in every genre but arcade games. There is something here for everyone who likes to think, to one degree or another.

So here, with every best wish for the season, is my list of all-time greats:

- Flight simulators, dove division: Flight Simulator (Microsoft or Sublogic, all computers).
- Flight simulators, hawk division: Falcon (Sphere, Mac/IBM), F-19 Stealth Fighter (Microprose, IBM), Gunship (Microprose, IBM).
- Quiet diversions: Chessmaster 2000 (Software Toolworks/Electronic Arts, all), Shanghai (Activision, all), Grandslam Bridge (Electronic Arts, IBM), Tetris (Sphere, all).
- Fantasy role-playing: Wizardry series (Sir-Tech, all), Ultima III et seq. (Origin, all).
- Science fiction role-playing: Starflight (Electronic Arts, IBM).
- Science fiction strategy: Reach for the Stars (SSG, all).
- Historical role-playing: Seven Cities of Gold (Electronic Arts, all), Pirates (Microprose, IBM/Apple), Nobunaga's Ambition, Romance of the Three Kingdoms (Koei, IBM).
- Football: NFL Challenge (Xor, IBM/Mac).
- Baseball: Earl Weaver Baseball (Electronic Arts, IBM/Amiga).
- Golf: Jack Nicklaus golf (Accolade, IBM).
- Road Racing: Ferrari Grand Prix (Bullseye, Mac), Ferrari Formula One (Electronic Arts, Amiga).
- War game, grand strategic: War in Russia (SSI, Apple).
- War game, tactical: Kampfgruppe and its spinoffs (SSI, Apple/IBM/Amiga).
- War game, small unit/tactical: Panzer Strike, Typhoon of Steel (SSI, Apple), Under Fire (Avalon Hill, Apple).
- Naval game, historical: Ancient Art of War at Sea (Broderbund, IBM/Mac).
- Naval game, surface: Strike Fleet (Lucasfilm, Apple).
- Naval game, submerged: Silent Service (Microprose, Apple/IBM).
- Business management for non-businessmen: Managing for Success (Blue Chip, all).
- Business management for businessmen: Business Simulator (Reality Technologies, IBM/Mac).
- Business role-playing: What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School (Reality Technologies, IBM/Mac).
- Stock Market (for fun): Wizard of Wall Street (Synapse/Broderbund, IBM).
- Text adventure: The Zork series (Infocom, all).

The best games, for me, are those that educate as they entertain. The historical role-playing games are excellent examples of this, as are two which for the life of me I cannot classify. They may, however, be the best adult computer games ever devised:

Space Max (Final Frontier, IBM) is a game in which the player manages every aspect of a private-sector project to construct an orbital space station; bring it in on time and within budget or you lose. It's written by a former NASA expert; it's used by the Harvard Business School.

Balance of Power (Mindscape, Apple/IBM/Mac) is a towering achievement. You are the president of the United States; your task is to avoid Armageddon for eight years while maintaining the nation's place in the scheme of things. It's extremely sophisticated.

Reprinted with permission. This column first appeared in *The Atlanta Journal-The Atlanta Constitution* December 20, 1988.

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#43 - WARGAMING THEN & NOW - Shiloh:Grant's Trial; Border Zone; Mech Brigade Tactics; UMS Preview; High Seas; Darkhorn; Empire; Inside Trader; Legacy of The Ancients; Goodbye "G" Ratings Pt.3; Blackjack Academy; Into The Eagle's Nest; Airborne Ranger; and more!

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#45 - SCIENCE FICTION - Space Quest Tips; Space Arcade Games; Computer Games in 1988; The Future of Computer Games (Isaac Asimov, Harry Harrison, Douglas Adams, Jerry Pournelle, and others); Halls of Montezuma; Wasteland Sneak Preview; Skyfox II; Breach; SSI Company Report; Terrorpods; and more!

#46 - SPORTS SURVEY - Spring Sports Survey; Dungeon Master; World Games; Police Quest; Fog of War Roundtable Part 1; Ferrari Formula One Preview; Sherlock; Skate or Die!; Strike Fleet; Demon Stalkers and Gauntlet; Sons of Liberty; Deathlord; Knight Orc; and more!

#47 - MIST, MAGIC & MYSTERY - Ultima V; Wasteland; CRP Editorial by Scorpia; Trust & Betrayal; Panzer Strike; The Future of CRP Games (by Dave Arneson); Game Design Insights from The Journal of Computer Game Design; Echelon; The Train; CRP game hints; Maniac Mansion; Soko-Ban; Tetris; Ports of Call; and more!

#48 - COMBAT! - The Hunt For Red October; Bard's Tale III; Wasteland Hints; Long Lance; Return To Atlantis; Project Stealth Fighter; Universal Military Simulator Modifications; Wooden Ships & Iron Men; Twilight's Ransom; Gaming on Compuserve and GEnie; Video Gaming World (New Department); Mech Brigade Scenario; and more!

#49 - GAME DESIGN - Tom Clancy on Red Storm Rising; Lord British Talks About The Ultima Series; Advanced Dungeons & Dragons; Jinxter Tips by Scorpia; Space Quest II; Infocomics; Computer Gaming Books; Rampage; Decisive Battles of the Civil War; Dark Castle Hints; Romance of the Three Kingdoms; Fire Brigade and more!

#50 - 50th ISSUE CELEBRATION - History of CGW; Questron II; Jet and F/A-18 Interceptor; History of Computer Game Design; Obliterator; Stellar Crusade; Strike Fleet Tactics; Three Stooges; Seven Spirits of Ra; Tobruk-Clash of Armour; Scorpion's Mail; Star Saga I; and more!

#51 - POLITICS '88. Politics of War; Campaign '88; Wings of Fury; The President is Missing; Global Commander; PT-109; Neuromancer; William Gibson Interview; Rommel; Dr. Dumont's Wild P.A.R.T.I.; and more!

#52. SPORTS SPECIAL. Zak McCracken; Pete Rose Pennant Fever; Pete Rose Interview; Michael Jordan Interview; Larry Bird & Michael Jordan Go One-On-One; Red Storm Rising; Star Trek: First Contact; Fool's Errand; Carrier Command; Star Trek: Rebel Universe; Rocket Ranger; CGW Game of the Year Awards; and more!

#53. CHRISTMAS BUYING GUIDE. Christmas Buying Guide; Paladin; Wizard Wars; First Expedition; Red Storm Rising Tactics; Battlehawks 1942; Demon's Winter; Fantastic Voyages II; and more!

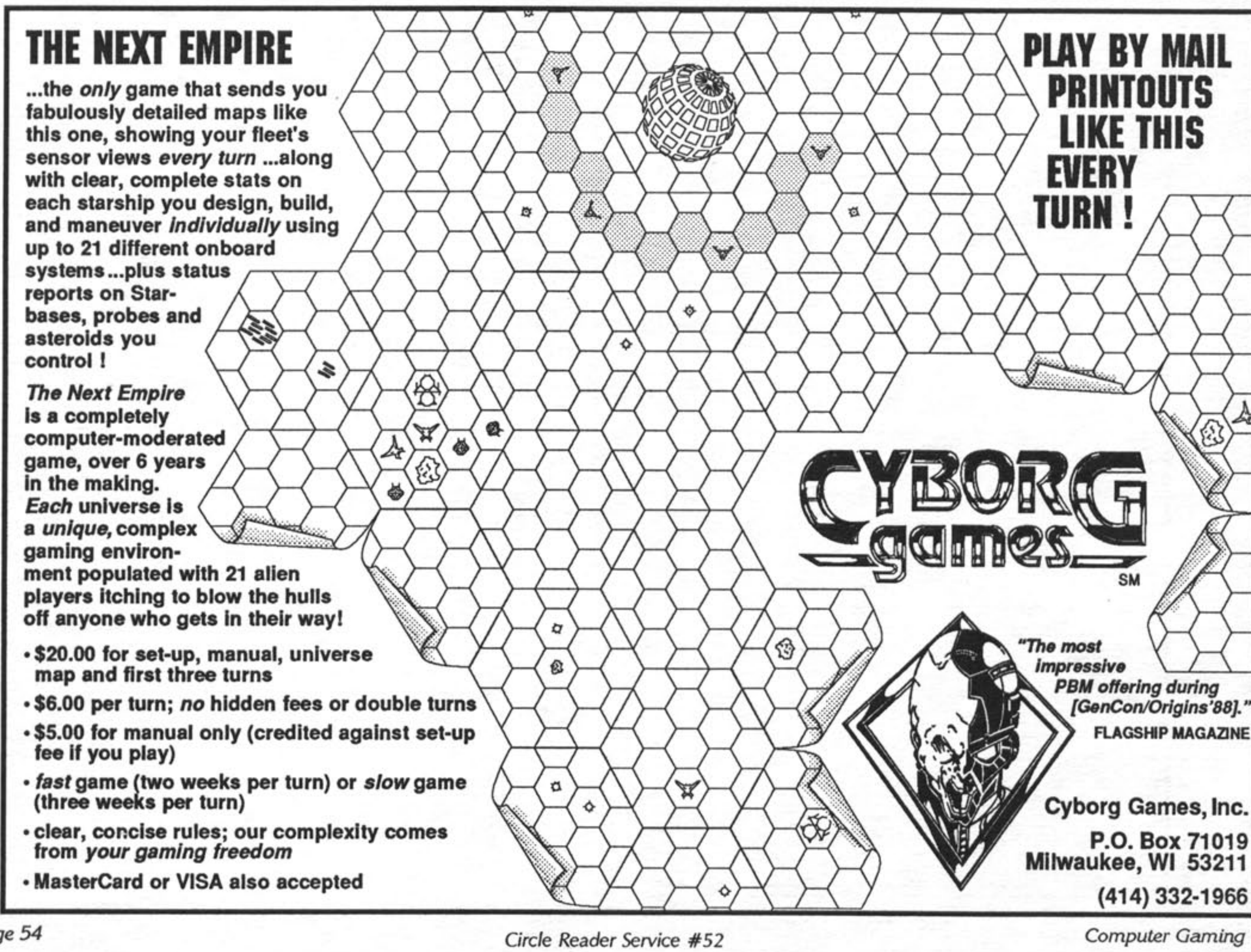
#54. ENTERTAINING THE TROOPS. Steel Thunder; Stealth Mission; King's Quest IV; Interview with Roberta Williams; Manhunter New York; Starglider II; Typhoon of Steel; Sentinel Worlds I: Future Magic; Decisive Battles II; Dragonlance; Empire Designer Tips; and more!

#55 DANGEROUS FUTURES. Zork Zero; Alien Mind; Ocean Ranger; Battletech; Reach for the Stars (Third Edition); Leisure Suit Larry II; Visions of Aftermath; Times of Lore; Genghis Khan; F-19 Stealth Fighter; Top Ad Contest; and more!

#56 GAME DESIGN. Winter CES Report; The Colony; Game Designers' Conference; Corruption; Battlechess; TV Sports Football; Modem Wars; Wizardry V; Police Quest 2; F-19 Designer Notes; Mars Saga; Adventure Game Construction Kit Survey; Scorpion's Mail; and more!

#57 CROSSBOWS,CUIRASSIERS AND CRUISERS. Decisive Battles of the Civil War, Vol III; In Harm's Way; Twilight Zone Hints; Battles of Napoleon; Tower Toppler; Road Raider; Heavy Metal; Might & Magic II; Sorcerer Lord; The Legend of Blacksilver; Strike Fleet Strategy Notes; Neuromancer; Caveman Ugh-lympics; Grand Prix Circuit; and more!

#58 COMPUTER CAVALCADE OF SPORTS. Desert Rats; Jetfighter; F-14 Tomcat; Annals of Rome; Scorpion's Mail; Techno-Cop; The Magic Candle; Computer Cavalcade of Sports Survey; Captain Blood; Wayne Gretzky Hockey; Gold Rush; Scavenger Hunt Results; and more!



Circle Reader Service #52

On the R.I.D. card provided opposite page 4, please rate the following games (if you have played them) and articles (if you have read them) by using a letter grade scale (I.e. A to F). Just rate the games as if you were an educator. As with the world of education, the scale will translate to:

A= Excellent

B= Above Average

C= Average

D= Below Average

F= Failure

If you wish, you may assign pluses (+) or minuses (-) to your letter grade (i.e. B+, B-, C+, C-, etc.). As always, rate only those games that you have played.

Over the next three issues we will rerate all of the games on our current R.I.D. list and a number of other titles as well. Remember that thousands of gamers will be making buying decisions based on the results of these ratings, so help your fellow gamer out and let him know what is a worthy purchase and what is not.

Demographics

(List the appropriate number)

1. What is your age ?

1 = Under 14 years old
2 = 14-17 years old
3 = 18-20 years old
4 = 21-30 years old
5 = 31-35 years old
6 = 36-40 years old
7 = 41-50 years old
8 = 51+ years old

2. What machine(s) do you play games on?

(List all numbers that apply. List the machine you use most often first, the others in decending order of use).

1 = IBM, clones, Tandy
2 = Amiga
3 = Apple 8 bit
4 = Apple IIgs
5 = Atari ST
6 = Atari 8 bit
7 = C-64/128
8 = Macintosh
9 = Other (specify)

3. How much time do you typically spend playing computer games each week?

1 = Less than 2 hours
2 = 2-5 hours
3 = 6-10 hours
4 = 11-20 hours
5 = 21-30 hours
6 = 31+ hours

Games

RID #59 Questions

4. Dungeon Master (FTL)
5. F-19 Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
6. Wasteland (EA)
7. Red Storm Rising (Microprose)
8. Ultima V (Origin)
9. Battlehawks 1942 (Lucasfilm)
10. Project: Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
11. King's Quest IV (Sierra)
12. Might & Magic II (New World)
13. Genghis Khan (Koei)
14. Sim City (Maxis)
15. Bard's Tale III (EA)
16. Battlechess (Interplay)
17. Combat Course (Mindscape)
18. Abrams Battle Tank (EA)
19. Gold Rush (Sierra)
20. Hostage Rescue Mission (Mindscape)
21. Journey (Infocom)
22. Wayne Gretzky Hockey (Bethesda)
23. Shogun (Infocom)
24. 688 Attack Sub (EA)
25. Jetfighter (Velocity)
26. Hidden Agenda (Springboard)
27. Tanglewood (Microdeal)
28. Tetris (Spectrum Holobyte)
29. Balance of Power: 1990 (Mindscape)
30. U.M.S. (Rainbird)
31. War In Middle Earth (Melbourne House)
32. Kings of the Beach (EA)
33. Mind Roll (Epyx)
34. The Honeymooners (First Row)
35. Space Racer (Broderbund)
36. First Over Germany (SSI)
37. Suzuki's RM250 Motocross (Gamestar)
38. Batman (Data East)
39. Hillsfar (SSI)
40. Bad Dudes (Data East)

Articles

41. Letters
42. Ancient Battles Review
43. First Over Germany Review
44. Scavengers Review
45. Inside The Industry
46. Prophecy 1 Review
47. Guardians of Infinity Hints
48. Deja Vu II Review
49. Sword of Sodan Review
50. 688 Attack Sub Review
51. Under The Ice Review
52. War In Middle Earth Review
53. Taking A Peek
54. Sim City Review

Questions

55. Which Title Do You Like For The War In Middle Earth Article?
A. Mordor, They Rode
B. Dial "M" For Mordor
C. From Mordor, With Love



Be it known to all gentle persons that the above named games have been well spoken of by our readers over a goodly period of time. Therefore they have been enshrined in the CGW Hall of Fame as games of renown and worthy of play by all

Conspicuously absent from "The Top 100" are the three new inductees into the CGW Hall of Fame. This month, we celebrate the secular apotheosis of Interstel's "Empire," the popular strategy game which won CGW's 1988 Game of the Year Award. The strategy game finished with a 9.97 rating under CGW's new system (7.84 in the old). Also, Microprose's "Pirates" (CGW's 1988 Action Game of the Year) anchors in the safe shoals of software stardom as it enters the Hall of Fame with a 9.71 rating in the new poll (7.57 under the previous guidelines) and "Earl Weaver Baseball" from Electronic Arts enters the Cooperstown of Computer Games with an 8.82 rating (7.31 on the old list and CGW's 1987 Game of the Year).

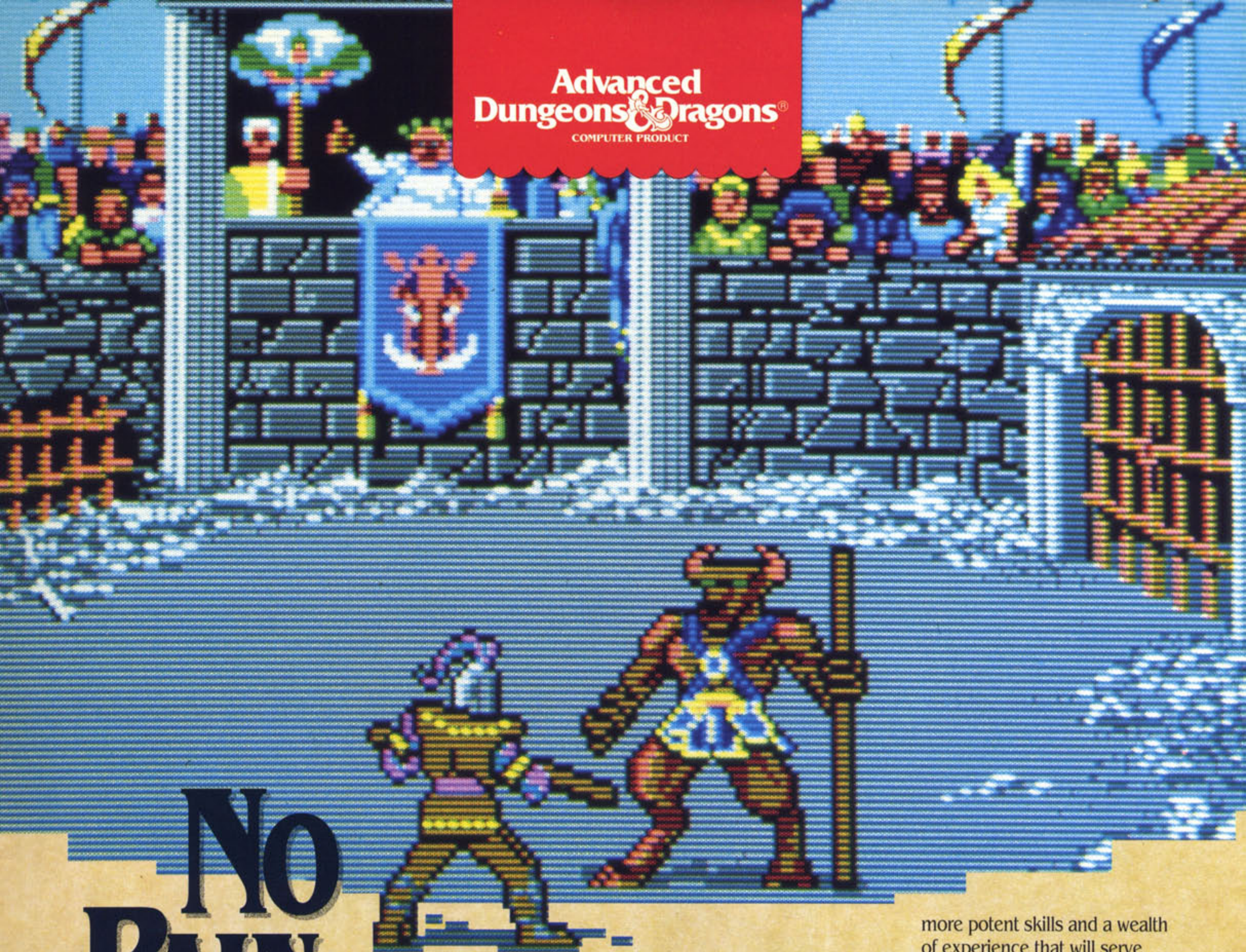
"Dungeon Master" continues to rank as the highest rated Role Playing Adventure and "F-19 Stealth Fighter" as the number one rated Simulation. "King's Quest IV" became the number one Adventure game. Historical figures loomed large in this rating period as "Genghis Khan" ended up as top Strategy Game and "Battles of Napoleon" ranked number one among pure Wargames. The top-rated Action game was "Battlehawks 1942".

The Categories

Strategy (ST): Games that emphasize strategic planning and problem solving.
Simulation (SI): Games based on first person perspectives of real world environments.
Adventure (AD): Games that allow you to take your alter ego through a storyline or series of events.
Role-Playing Adventures (RP): Adventure games that are based on character development (usually involving attributes).
Wargames (WG): Simulations of historical or futuristic warfare from a command perspective.
Action/Arcade (AC): Computer games that emphasize hand-eye coordination and reflexes.

The Top 100

Name	Mfg	Machine	Cat.	Avg.# Resp.	Rating
Dungeon Master	FTL	ST,GS,Am	RP	98	10.69
F-19 Stealth Fighter	MicPr	I	SI	75	9.95
Ultima V	Origin	Ap	RP	135	9.73
Red Storm Rising	MicPr	C	SI	53	9.57
Battlechess	Interplay	Am,I	ST	22	9.55
Project Stealth Fighter	MicPr	C	SI	58	9.55
Wasteland	EA	Ap,C,I	RP	127	9.50
Battlehawks 1942	Lucsfilm	I	AC,SI	61	9.40
King's Quest IV	Sierra	I,GS	AD	75	9.31
Might & Magic II	NwWrld	Ap	RP	51	9.31
Bard's Tale III	EA	Ap,C	RP	124	9.26
Genghis Khan	Koei	I	ST,RP	41	9.22
Battles of Napoleon	SSI	Ap,C	WG	33	9.18
Airborne Ranger	MicPr	C,I	AC	94	9.17
Pool of Radiance	SSI	C,I	RP	97	9.03
NFL Challenge	XOR	I,M	ST	86	8.87
Rocket Ranger	Cnmwre	Am,C	AC,AD	90	8.86
Neuromancer	Interplay	Ap,C	AD	31	8.84
Battletech	Infocom	I	RP	48	8.77
Fire Brigade	Panther	Am,I,M	WG	22	8.77
Typhoon of Steel	SSI	Ap,C	WG	56	8.77
Falcon	SpHolo	Many	SI	61	8.73
Sword of Sodan	Discvry	Am,GS	AC	28	8.68
Police Quest II	Sierra	I,GS	AD	43	8.65
Jack Nicklaus' Golf	Accolade	C,I	AC,ST	28	8.64
Nobunaga's Ambition	Koei	I	ST,RP	51	8.53
Carrier Command	Rainbird	ST,Am,I	AC,WG	49	8.51
Panzer Strike	SSI	Ap,C	WG	68	8.51
Silent Service	MicPr	Many	SI	257	8.50
TV Sports Football	Cnmwre	Am	AC,ST	51	8.49
Arkanoid	Dsc/Taito	Many	AC	69	8.38
Wings of Fury	Brdbnd	Ap	AC	52	8.38
Strike Fleet	EA	Ap,C,I	WG	79	8.37
Leisure Suit Larry II	Sierra	I,GS	AD	52	8.31
Modem Wars	EA	C,I	ST	24	8.29
Manhunter	Sierra	I,GS	AD	72	8.25
Police Quest	Sierra	I,GS	AD	98	8.23
Starglider II	Rainbird	Am,ST	AC	65	8.22
Three Stooges	Cnmwre	Am,C	AC	68	8.21
Battlegroup	SSI	Ap,C	WG	36	8.19
Stealth Mission	Sublogic	C	SI	36	8.19
Shiloh	SSI	Ap,C,I	WG	54	8.09
Zork Series	Infocom	Many	AD	218	8.09
Faery Tale Adv.	Micrill	Many	RP		8.07
Russia	SSG	Ap,C	WG		8.05
Sentinel Worlds	EA	I	RP	71	8.04
WC Leader Board	Access	C,Am	AC,ST	97	8.00
Leather Goddesses	Infocom	Many	AD	136	7.99
Breach	Omnitr	ST,Am,M	ST,RP	114	7.98
Enchanter	Infocom	Many	AD	115	7.97
Jordan vs. Bird	EA	C,I	AC	47	7.96
Wizardry V	Sir-Tech	Ap,I	RP	43	7.88
Eternal Dagger	SSI	Many	RP	72	7.85
Zork Zero	Infocom	M	AD	19	7.84
Rommel	SSG	Ap,C	WG	20	7.80
Halls of Montezuma	SSG	Ap,C,I	WG	44	7.75
Anc.Art War Sea	Brdbnd	I	ST,WG	108	7.74
Phantasie III	SSI	Many	RP	105	7.74
Phantasie	SSI	Many	RP	147	7.69
Star Saga I	MstrPly	Many	AD	41	7.66
Bard's Tale II	EA	Many	RP	166	7.64
Grand Prix	Accolade	I	AC	46	7.63
Sorcerer	Infocom	Many	AD	71	7.62
Spellbreaker	Infocom	Many	AD	93	7.62
Wizard's Crown	SSI	Ap,C,I	RP	133	7.62
Dec. Battles III	SSG	Ap,C	WG	23	7.57
Hitchhiker's Gde.	Infocom	Many	AD	198	7.57
Demon Stalkers	EA	C	AC,AD	57	7.54
Shadowgate	Mndscpe	Am,I,M	AD	66	7.53
Quarterstaff	Infocom	M	RP	23	7.52
Wishbringer	Infocom	Many	AD	81	7.52
Legacy Ancients	EA	Ap,C	RP	134	7.50
Planetfall	Infocom	Many	AD	139	7.49
Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	WG	42	7.48
Reach for Stars	SSG	Many	ST	38	7.45
Autoduel	Origin	Ap	RP	175	7.44
Bard's Tale	EA	Many	RP	81	7.43
Heroes of Lance	SSI	C,I,ST	AC,AD	77	7.43
King's Quest II	Sierra	Many	AD	115	7.43
Defender of Crown	Cnmwre	Many	AC,ST	253	7.39
Steel Thunder	Accolade	C	AC,SI	41	7.39
Lode Runner	Brdbnd	Many	AC	124	7.36
Guardians of Infinity	Paragon	I	AD	9	7.33
Micro League BB	MicLg	Many	ST	137	7.32
Zak McKracken	Lucsflm	I	AD	48	7.31
Times of Lore	Origin	Ap	RP	63	7.29
Crusade in Europe	MicPr	Ap,At,C	WG	81	7.25
No. Atlantic '86	SSI	Ap,M	WG	40	7.25
Paladin	Omnitr	Am,ST	ST,RP	71	7.25
Space M+A+X	Final Fr.	I	ST	28	7.25
Star Fleet I	Interstel	Many	ST	177	7.25
War in So. Pacific	SSI	Ap,C	WG	53	7.25
PT-109	SpHolo	M	SI	36	7.22
Seven Cities of Gold	EA	Many	AD,ST	186	7.22
Balance of Power	Mndscpe	Many	ST	99	7.21
Legend of Blacksilver	Epyx	C	RP	28	7.21
F-14 Tomcat	Actvsn	C	SI	20	7.20
Anc. Art of War	Brdbnd	I,M	ST,WG	112	7.19
Hardball	Accolade	Many	AC	163	7.18
Battle of Antietam	SSI	Many	WG	84	7.17



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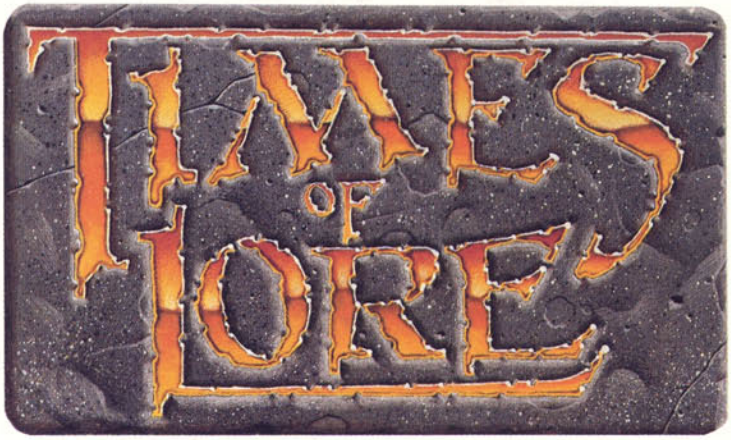
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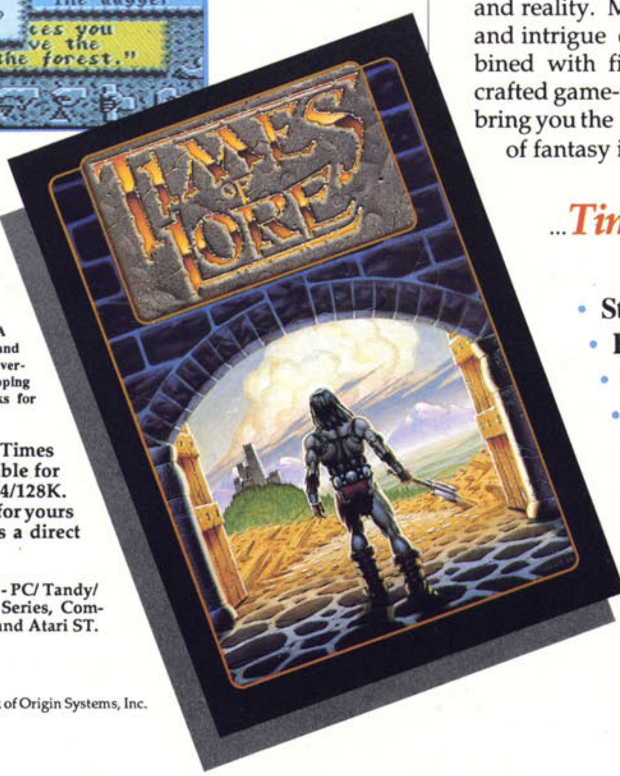
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